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Suvi Vähätalo

# FLOWER COURSE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

– Case study

MASTER'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

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Suvi Vähätalo

# FLOWER COURSE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

– Case study

This Master's thesis focuses on developing the flower course service of Elovainion kukka with service design tools and methods. Elovainion kukka is a flower shop which provides flower course services. The aim of the research was to understand the current state, gather insights of the flower course service and based on that ideate and develop the further improvement.

The process of the study follows the double diamond design process and research methods and tools used to understand the current state were benchmarking, stakeholder map and survey. Customer insights and needs were gathered with observation, interview and empathy map. User personas, customer journey map, value proposition map and business model canvas were created in ideate and develop phase. All the flower course service functions before, during and after service were visualized with service blueprint.

As a result of this study, improvement suggestions were added to the service blueprint for the further development of the flower course service. The research showed that the customers' feelings are in line with the results of the customer survey, and in order to maintain a good customer experience, it was suggested to start continuous measurement.

## KEYWORDS

Service design, customer experience, emotions, measuring

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Aim of the study

Companies are increasingly developing services to differentiate and cope with the hard competition. Companies are transforming their business from product companies to product and service companies. Digitalization is changing society. Covid19 pandemic which started in the spring of 2020 accelerated digitalization. The remote work recommendation changed the behavior of people and organizations. Companies need to be increasingly prepared to adapt their services to the needs of their customers. Service design helps to develop services so that they are based on an understanding and not an assumption of customer needs. A customer-centric approach to developing services can be achieved with the help of service design methods and tools. Services that can offer a successful experience and arise deep emotions in their customers are recommended further.

This thesis is a case study of a flower shop entrepreneur. The flower shop provides flower and interior decoration gifts products and flower services. Commissioner has an interest to develop especially the flower course service. Commissioner is a self-employed entrepreneur. The flower shop is open every day of the week. Currently, the entrepreneur employs one employee to have one day off per week. (Personal communication with the entrepreneur 5th of April 2021.)

The aim of this study is to research how flower courses can be developed and present a solution for enhanced course service and experience for the commissioner. The development work is done with service design methods and tools. New flower course development ideas are developed based on the research results.

The commissioner has identified that there is a need for a flower course booking system to bring payments, customer contact information, and course reservations to one place. Currently, flower course registration and payments are taking too much time from the commissioner and are hard to handle.

There is a focus to investigate how to measure customer emotions and get customer experience from flower courses and follow feedback. Based on regular feedback, the

commissioner can react quickly, and new flower course ideas can be generated with agile development.

The result of the study is presented in the service blueprint where the flower course service activities and development targets are identified before, during, and after the service.

The research questions of the thesis are:

1. How the current flower course service can be developed?
2. How to follow flower course success and customer emotions?

The first question will find out the current state of the flower course and, based on that, find solutions and ideas for the found development targets. The second question will find out how the flower course success can be followed regularly and meet the changing need.

## 1.2 Frame of reference

The framework of this research is presented in Figure 1. As said before, this study aims to develop flower course service and course experience in the flower shop called Elovainion kukka. Company brand, mission, vision, strategy, and values are contributing factors for development work. Brand and value communication should be consistent throughout the company's services. The target group of the study is the future and current customers participating in the courses. Flower course service and experience are developed based on customer interest, wishes, and needs. Research work is done with service design methods and tools. External factors like trends and change in the operating environment are affecting this research work.

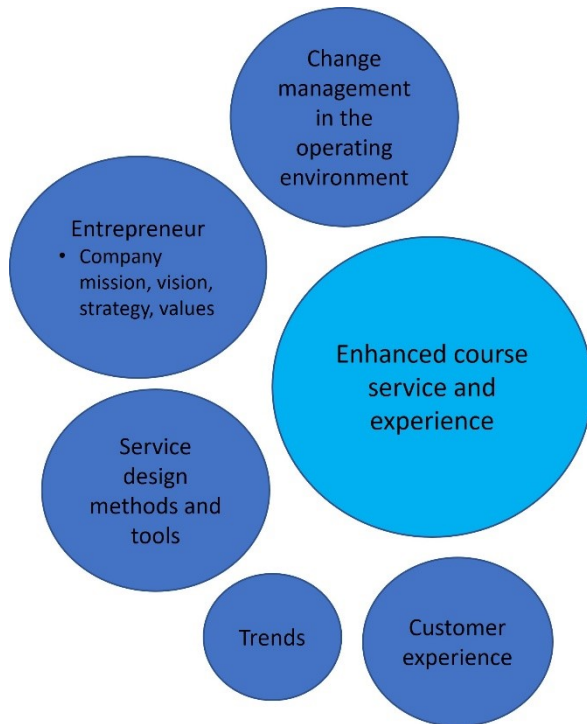


Figure 1. A frame of reference.

### 1.3 Process and measuring customer experience

The process follows the double diamond model created by Design Council in 2005 (Koivisto et al. 2019, 42). A double diamond consists of two diamonds where the first diamond seeks to identify the problem to be solved with phases discover and define. The discovery phase involves gathering data about the problem and understanding the commissioner and customer needs. Define phase analyses of the gathered information. The second diamond seeks to solve the problem with the phases develop and deliver. It starts with the development phase where solution models and concepts are ideated. Deliver phase delimit the best of the ideas generated that meet the goals. The final phase produces an idea or concept which can be prototyped and suggested for development.

In the process based on design thinking, divergent and convergent thinking alternate. The divergent phase creates innovative ideas and alternatives instead of convergent thinking testing, evaluating, and narrowing down the ideas toward the best solution. In the double diamond process, discover and develop phases include divergent thinking.



However, define and deliver phases represent convergent thinking. (Koivisto et al. 2019, 39.)

Customer experience measuring provides information that enables the company to make decisions and actions related to the customer experience. Measuring should be based on selected key performance indicators, but there should be always enough room to change and refine measurement. Measuring should be easy, regular, and not spend too much of the company's resources. Company management must be committed to measurement already in the design phase. The design of customer experience measurement should resolve the following things, whom to ask, when to ask, how to ask for feedback and what is asked from a customer. (Korkiakoski, 2019. 76-77.)

The thesis process model (Figure 2.) describes the double diamond model and what service design tools and methods are used in each phase. Measuring is added to the process chart for continuous development. Questions about why, how, and what are presented to achieve a deeper understanding of each phase.

	Discover	Define	Develop	Deliver
Why?	Finding the right problem to solve.	Understanding commissioner's and customers needs.	Creating the ideas to solve the problem.	Providing the ideas to the commissioner.
How?	Benchmarking	Observation	Personas	Service Blueprint
	Stakeholder map	Interview	Customer journey	
	Survey	Empathy map	Value proposition canvas	Development suggestions
	Measuring		Business model canvas	
What?	Understanding the current state	Gather customer insights	Ideating	Visualize the ideas
	Goals	Data collection	Developing	Show the value
	Plan customer experience measuring	Data analysis		

Figure 2. Process chart.

## 2 RESEARCH METHODS AND TOOLS

### 2.1 Research methods

Qualitative research methods are used in this thesis. The methods and tools used in this thesis are benchmarking, mood board, interview, stakeholder map, observation, digital survey, empathy map, personas, customer journey map, business model canvas, and value proposition canvas. The aim to use service design methods and tools is to understand customer needs. Based on these methods and tools service blueprint is created from the flower course service.

#### 2.1.1 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a method that helps to understand how other companies or organizations are working in the market. Benchmarking helps to clarify own activity compared to competitors. Knowledge from competitors speeds up the company's development targets and willingness to develop. With benchmarking, the company can learn from competitors' mistakes, evaluate the success of others, and differentiate from competitors. (Ojasalo, 2015. 186.)

Benchmarking for this study will be done via the Internet. Flower course service providers will be searched on the Internet. The purpose of the benchmarking will be to study competitors' flower course supply.

#### 2.1.2 Interview

An Interview is a data collection method that seeks to obtain more information about the object of development. The purpose of the interview will be to clarify or deepen matters. Contextual interviews will be tied to a real operating environment. Interviews conducted in the operating environment will provide a deeper picture of the interviewee's real thoughts. (Ojasalo, 2015. 106.)

In this thesis, the entrepreneur and course participants will be interviewed. The purpose of the interview with the entrepreneur will be to find out the current state of the company and clarify how the flower courses are arranged currently.

Flower course participants will be interviewed in the flower store at the same time when they attend the flower course. The customer interviews will intend to understand flower course customers better, and what are their needs, emotions, and expectations (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 120).

Both interviews will be semi-structured. Questions for the interview will be prepared beforehand. The semi-structured interview will allow for changing the order of questions and wording of questions during the interview. (Ojasalo, 2015. 108.)

### 2.1.3 Digital survey

Digital surveys can be conducted with free and easy-to-use internet applications. The strength of the digital survey is that all survey tasks such as a questionnaire, responses, and data reporting can be done cheaply and effortlessly with the help of internet applications. Digital data collection is fast, can be conducted in real-time, and is utilized continuously. (Ojasalo, 2015. 128.)

The survey will aim to measure customer satisfaction with the course activities. The second aim of the survey will be to enable continuous feedback and improvement of the flower course service. Clients participating in the courses will be used as the basic group of the survey. The survey will be digital and implemented with Google Forms.

### 2.1.4 Observation

Observation is a suitable method for development work and can be conducted in different ways such as mystery shopping or a diary. Observation will be based on real events on the spot, which is why it can be considered a better method than surveys and interviews. (Ojasalo, 2015. 42.) Observation will be performed during the flower course which is held on flower shop premises.

### 2.1.5 Co-creation

Co-creation is one of the key elements in service design. Co-creation helps to improve and develop the customer experience and service. Co-creation and empathizing with the customers and the service providers help to find the right problems to define and solve. It is a collaboration between stakeholders to get insights into how the service can be developed. It combines different skill sets and knowledge towards a common goal. Co-creation engages all the stakeholders involved and high participation reduces resistance to change. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 279.) A co-creation session will be held together with the commissioner. The stakeholder map, personas, customer journey map, value proposition canvas, and business model canvas will be reviewed in the co-creation session.

## 2.2 Service design tools

Service design tools are used in the discover, define, develop and deliver phases of the study. Service design tools help to understand customer needs, create ideas, and develop and understand the ideas. With the help of the service design tools, customer insights and development suggestions are visualized.

### 2.2.1 Stakeholder map

The stakeholder map illustrates the most important people and organizations which are involved in service. People and organizations shown in the stakeholder map might have a direct or indirect impact on the service. Stakeholder map helps to understand the relationship between the service provider and the stakeholder. It will also reveal relationships between the stakeholders. With the help of the stakeholder map, it is possible to discover new business opportunities. (Stickdorn et. al. 2018, 58.) As a result of stakeholder map flower course stakeholders and their relationships with each other will be understood. The stakeholder map will increase an understanding of the current state of the flower course service.

### 2.2.2 Empathy map

An empathy map has four areas, what the user said, did, thought, and felt. These areas summarize learnings from the user's experience. The empathy map can be used as a base of the persona because it will provide an overview of the persona's experience. The empathy map encourages to dig deeper and think user's behavior, thinking, and feeling. (Dam & Siang 2020.) In this thesis, an empathy map is used as a base of personas. An empathy map is created based on the collected research material from interviews, surveys, and observations.

### 2.2.3 Personas

Personas are fictional profiles representing a group of users with similar service needs. The persona profile is an archetype and should be based on real research. A persona profile makes a group of customers more understandable. With the help of personas, empathy can be built for the specific customer group. A company can use personas to represent insights and research results for a specific research question. (Stickdorn et. al. 2018, 40-41.) In this research, personas will be used for deepening the understanding of user needs and behaviors. They will be used to create empathy and understanding with the customers.

### 2.2.4 Customer journey map

The customer journey map visualizes the customer's overall experience with the service. A customer journey map will be used to visualize current experiences like further experiences. The customer journey map will describe all key steps of the service where the customer is interacting with a company and the customer's experiences with the service. The customer journey map helps to reveal pain points, emotions, and opportunities for improvement. (Stickdorn et. al. 2018, 43-46.) In this thesis current state of the customer journey map is created. A customer journey map helps to expose improvement opportunities for flower course service.

### 2.2.5 Value proposition canvas

The value proposition canvas consists of two parts. The customer segment part describes the understanding of the customer and the value proposition part describe how the value is created for the customer. The customer (segment) profile in the canvas has three parts: customer jobs, pains, and gains. The value proposition has three parts products and services, pain relievers, and gain creators. Value proposition canvas achieves fit when one or more of these two sides match with each other. Value proposition design benefits are that it makes value creation visible for all and helps to design and deliver what customers want. (Osterwalder et. al. 2014, 8-9.) The value proposition canvas is created on the basis of the research results. It aims to show what creates value for the customer in the flower course service.

### 2.2.6 Service blueprint

The service blueprint shows customer actions and their interaction between frontstage and backstage actions. Frontline actions are visible to the customer. Backstage actions are activities that are not visible to the customer. The line of visibility divides these actions in the service blueprint. Physical evidence can be physical places, physical objects, and online channels. A customer has contact with them and those can be designed. Support processes are activities executed by external partners or different organizations. They can be triggered from frontstage or backstage by customers. (Stickdorn et. al. 2018, 54-55.) A service blueprint is created based on the research results and analyzing work. The first service blueprint will present the current state of the flower course service as a whole, and improvement ideas generated during the study will be added to the second service blueprint.

### 3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Flower business

The first Finnish flower store was established in Helsinki in 1875 by Christian Bonhof. Flowers and flower tyings were purchased in 1850 from gardeners in the largest cities in Finland. Finnish Florists Association was established in 1932. The purpose of the Finnish Florists Association was to advertise the Flower business, professional development, and training of assistants. (Suomen Kukkakauppiasliitto n.d.)

According to Statistics Finland (Figure 3), the number of florists has decreased by 132 stores from the year 2013 (Tilastokeskus. 2021). The supply and sale of flowers have increased in supermarkets, but florists are still used for festive occasions such as weddings, christenings, and funerals. (Personal communication with the entrepreneur 5th of April 2021.)

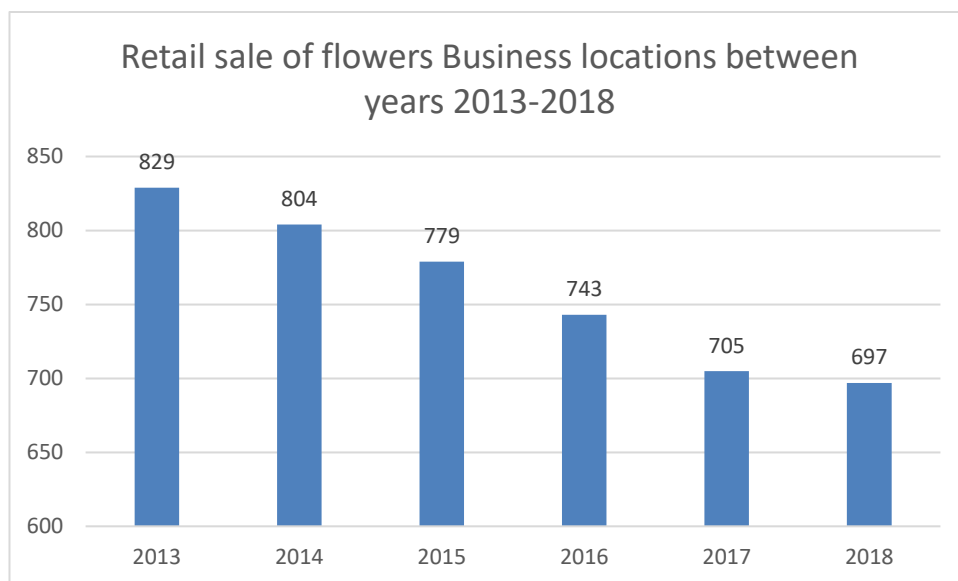


Figure 3. Retail sale of flowers business locations between 2013-2018 (Tilastokeskus 2021).

Finns are using approximately 105 euros for flowers during one year. That rate includes potted flowers and cut flowers. The amount of potted flowers is 60 percent and the rest 40 percent are cut flowers. (Tuomaala, 2020.)

In the first Covid-19 summer of 2020, all summer flowers were sold exceptionally early. According to the study ordered by the Finnish Glasshouse Growers' Association, 12 percent of Finns were planning to increase their garden shopping in the summer of 2021. 76 percent were planning to buy flowers as much as in the summer of 2020. One in three women aged 25-34 and one in four men aged 18-34 estimate that they will increase their purchases of flowers. Two-thirds of Finns, buy summer flowers for their garden, balcony, patio, or cottage in the summer. The study also reveal that the smaller the locality, the more flowers are purchased. 76 percent of respondents plan to purchase summer flowers in municipalities, and 58 percent in the Helsinki metropolitan area. (Kauppapuutarhaliitto 2021.)

Based on Pyhtilä Finnish eKukka-service increased its members by 200 flower stores in the first Covid19 spring of 2020. Finnish eKukka-service has 600 flower stores in Finland. In eKukka-service, customers are ordering flowers directly from the chosen flower store and they are delivering the flowers by themselves or via the help of a courier. Demand for the service increased fivefold in the first Covid19 spring and the demand has stayed at the same level in 2021. (Pyhtilä, 2021.)

According to interview with Finnish entrepreneur, who has been selling flowers for 40 years and has seen many flower and garden trends during that time. Covid19 and staying at home increased Finns' investment in their gardens. Finns are establishing perennial beds, building terraces, and buying more than before summer flowers, herbs, chilies, and tomatoes. (Rantakoski 2021.)

### 3.2 Trends

A trend can be a direction in which something is developing. A trend can be a change in a situation or in the way how people are behaving. Trends do not arise or do not die suddenly, except wild cards that are surprising changes. The development of a trend into a consumer trend takes time because it requires an increase in the number of users as well as like-minded people. Usually, change in people's behavior is slow, except in the case of the wild card. Trends do not continue indefinitely, they can end or change unexpectedly. It is possible to forecast trends and changes in trends by observing weak signals. Weak signals are early signs that may be significant changes in the future. (Hiltunen, 2017, 56-57.)



According to Hanifi 2019, leisure time is more important for Finns than work. Almost 60 percent of those aged 15 and over consider leisure time to be an important area of life. In contrast, 27 percent considered work to be at the same level. (Hanifi, 2019.)

Hiltunen raises the “I did it myself” trend to one of the 18 consumer trends in 2017. I did it myself trend is an increased interest in handicrafts, gardening, decoration, baking, and cooking. (Hiltunen, 2017, 155-156.)

The handicraft touches on also a consumer trend “Temple of body and soul”. The trend “Temple of body and soul” is an increased interest in well-being. (Hiltunen, 2017, 139.) One part of mental well-being is slowing down life. Handicrafts can be considered as one tool for downshifting.

Self-actualization is one of the basic needs of human life. Creative activities can meet this need. Because of creativity, humans can solve problems flexibly and imaginatively for creating new solutions. To be able to survive challenges in life, creative thinking is needed and the ability to see things differently. Creativity is a congenital feature, it can be shown in everyday life as a problem-solving skill or artistic activity. The connection to creativity is worth to be strengthened because the connection to creativity can be loosed in case of adversities or exhaustion. Creative activity can be refreshing and rewarding. It can give energy and it can take beyond everyday life. (Karjalainen, 2019, 7.)

Professor Sinikka Pöllänen describes how crafting and doing by hand support enthusiasts' experience of life management and mental well-being. The therapeutic nature of the craft can be related to craft materials, products, emergence of a sense of accomplishment, mental growth, development of physical and cognitive skills, sense of control, emotions and thoughts of one's own body, and social and cultural aspects of craft dimensions. Handicrafts can work as a versatile therapeutic tool for the enthusiast both consciously and unconsciously. (Pöllänen, 2012, 5.)

Flower tying is a creative process where fresh flowers, leaves, and other materials are bringing nature to indoors. Handcrafting, the use of senses, and attractive materials bring joy to the creator. Flower tying is therapeutic, empowering, and refreshing to work with fresh flowers, especially in the middle of winter which is the darkest time in Finland. (Tuohimetsä & Rantanen, 2018, 65-66.)

### 3.3 Sustainability and consumers

The flower industry has a reputation for poor work conditions and low pay on flower farms. Cut flowers are imported from flower farms in Africa or Latin America. Flower farms in developing countries need a lot of water, but energy is not usually needed there for greenhouse heating. To maintain freshness, the flowers must be delivered quickly to the flower store. Flower transportation and flower cold storage need a lot of energy and flower transportation from flower farms to consumers produce carbon dioxide. (Fredenburgh, 2019.)

According to Korhonen 2020 research, 45 % of Finnish consumers belong to Lohas (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) heavy or Lohas medium groups. Lohas heavy consumers prefer environmentally friendly products, and recycled materials, and buy Fair Trade products. The majority of them support charities and promote sustainable development to their family and friends. A growing number of Finns are considering the consequences of their consumption. Lohas medium consumers are more than average interested in health and sustainable development promoting products and services. The research was conducted in January 2020 among a thousand Finnish consumers. The classification of the groups was made based on consumer behavior related to well-being, responsibility, and regular participation in volunteering and charity. Lohas heavy group has increased by seven percent and the medium group has increased by four percent since research from 2014. In Lohas heavy group 60 percent were women. (Korhonen, 2020. 25)

“A good consumer” is one of Hiltunen’s 18 consumer trends which are presented in Figure 4. Consumers think about their consumption choices based on ethical, ecological, and voluntary criteria. Ethical and voluntary are arising in the world and in Finland. Companies and organizations do charities for a variety of purposes. Examples of this are charity products like the Roosa-nauha campaign and ResQ which is providing food waste products, cloth, and raw material recycling in stores. One big charity project in the healthcare sector is the building of new children's hospital in Helsinki. (Hiltunen, 2017, 166-167.)



Figure 4. 18 Consumer trends based on Hiltunen (Hiltunen, 2022).

During the covid-19 pandemic focus in grocers was on product safety and hygiene. However, sustainability remains the key priority for consumers. Most European consumers want to focus on sustainability and the environment. Consumers want those stakeholders in the industry act accordingly in environmental responsibility, social responsibility, and corporate governance. Based on Gatzer and Roos, sustainability and business success go hand in hand. Financial performance and ESG (environmental, social, and governance criteria) have a positive link between them. Consumer goods that are marketed based on sustainability have nearly four times higher growth rates than the market average. (Gatzer & Roos, 2021.)

### 3.4 Design thinking and service design in business development

Design is the mindset which target is to solve problems and produce the best possible customer experience. Design thinking can be defined in several ways and it can have several dimensions. (Maula & Maula, 2019, 20.) Based on Buchanan's explanation design thinking consists of four definitions, which are presented in Figure 5. All the definitions direct to the different strategies and processes of designing, reflecting approaches from different aspects, which is the strength of design thinking. (Buchanan, 2015.)

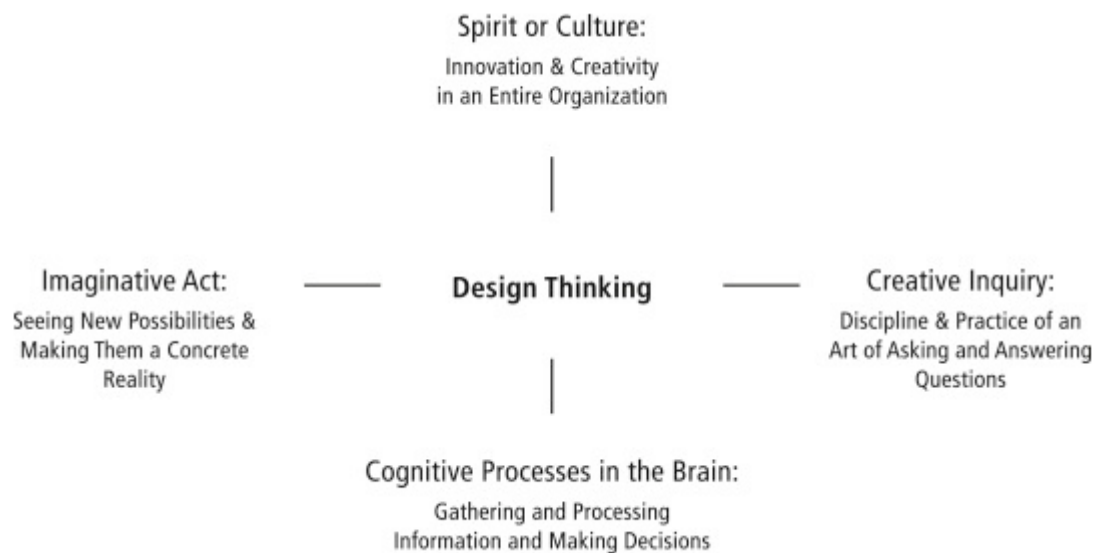


Figure 5. Four meanings of Design thinking based on Buchanan (Buchanan, 2015).

Design thinking is a human-centric way to understand customer needs and experiences. It reframes the problems and exploits different perspectives. In design thinking, ideas are implemented with tests and prototypes at an early stage. (Maula & Maula, 2019, 20.) Gruber et. al. defines design thinking based on dimensions, presented in Figure 6. The process is collaborative and involves all the users and stakeholders framing the problem. The process is also interdisciplinary and iterative. Each phase includes design, business, and engineering disciplines, and it is possible to move forward and backward between the phases. (Gruber et. al. 2015, 1.)

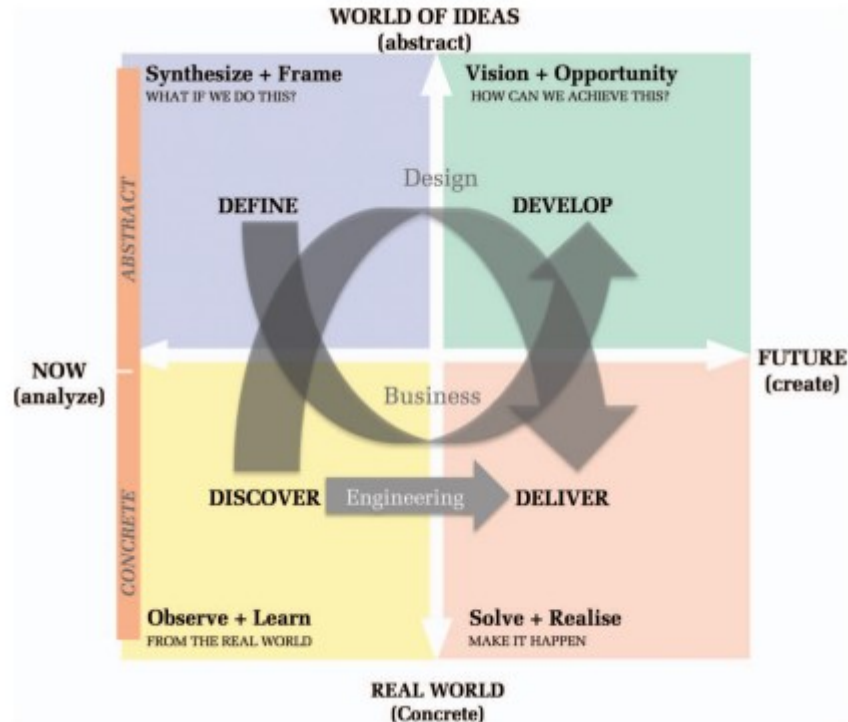


Figure 6. Design thinking dimensions (Gruber et. al. 2015).

Based on design principles any problems can be approached. Design thinking includes several methods which can be utilized for production process development, organizational change, or development of product, service, experience, and interaction. Target is to discover under surface and understand the real needs of customers and produce something that customers need. The purpose is not to sell and market something that is decided to do and assumed that customers are needing. (Maula & Maula, 2019, 24-27.)

Service design is based on design thinking and utilized its principles. Service design is an area of expertise that concentrates on services, unmaterial experiences, and uses methods suitable for service development. (Koivisto et. al. 2019, 36.)

### 3.5 Change management

The operating environment is changing based on global and national trends. Changes in the operating environment can grow the business or create a significant threat to the business. Technological development like digitalization, social trends, changes in

customer behavior, and trends like population aging are examples of global and national trends. Economical trends such as the amount of money available for consumers are affecting directly the business. Industry-specific trends can affect the stakeholder's action, availability, and pricing of the raw materials and new compensatory services and products coming to the market. All changes in the operating environment can not be controlled, but the company can take different roles in the change. Roles are follower, endurance, challenger, and pioneer. Follower reacts to changes based on current business operations. Endurance adjusts activities and defends positions taking into account the changes. Challenger seeks to benefit from the changes, for example by launching new products. Pioneer knows customers' needs and pain points, proactively builds the future, radically changes its operations, and contributes to the development of the operating environment. Because change is continuous, it is not enough to make one big change at once. According to valuations, design thinking helps organizations to act in the rapidly changing environment and take the pioneering role in the VUCA-environment. VUCA-environment term is used to describe the rapidly changing operating environment (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous). (Maula & Maula, 2019, 97-99.)

Ritala and Vuori are writing about shaping. Everything is not changing even if the change is radical. Shaping thinking respects the continuing and radical change. It is focusing on the way which enables effective change but is not causing any harm. In shaping thinking, creating change is done with four steps. The first step is that everything is not changing. The second step is the question of what remains the same. The third step is the question of what will be changed. The fourth step considers how to achieve the change in the best possible way. These principles and questions help to target the change in such a way that most affects the results. Energy is not wasted on those things which are working well in the old and new operating environments. ( Ritala & Vuori, 2019, 107.)

Learning is the key element that makes companies survive and succeed in the future. Because the future is hard to predict, companies need to actively create clarity on that. To be successful in the future, companies need to proactively identify latent customer needs, boldly envision what the world could look like tomorrow, and agilely reform their operations accordingly. Development with the help of service design can help companies through these changes, but it will need the courage to challenge current operating models as well as strong change management. (Koivisto et. al. 2019, 28.)

### 3.6 Customer value

Value is the relationship between benefit and price. The value experienced by the customer is formed from past experiences and what the customer value. The value of a product and service consists of how much the customer perceives it to be. People buy goods and services to achieve what they want or to get something resolved and thus feel they are getting value. The price of a product or service does not directly affect the amount of value perceived. Value can be produced more at a lower price when the price-benefit ratio experienced by the customer is good. (Tuulaniemi, 2011, 15-16.)

According to Löytänä & Korhikoski companies create prerequisites for value with their action and products. The customer creates value for herself through her activities. Value for the customer can be divided into four categories as presented in Figure 7:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Economic value</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is price</li> <li>• Based on offers and discounts</li> <li>• Competitive advantage is affordability</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Emotional value</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is customer experience</li> <li>• Personalization of experiences</li> <li>• Competitive advantage is unique experiences and exceeding expectations</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Operational value</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is reliability and quality</li> <li>• Efficiency and speed in operations</li> <li>• Competitive advantage is quality</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Symbolic value</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is image, story and brand</li> <li>• Belonging to the tribe</li> <li>• Premium-thinking</li> <li>• Competitive advantage is brand</li> </ul>

Figure 7. Formation of values created for the customer (Based on Löytänä & Korhikoski, 2014).

Economic value is based on offers and discounts. The focus of economical value is price and minimal costs to the customer. From a competitive point of view, economic value is the easiest to copy. Operational value benefits the customer with savings in time and effort. The value consists of reliability and overall quality. From a competitive point of view, operational value is easy to copy and it is hard to maintain and develop bigger. Symbolic values are based on image, story, and brand. The customer experiences cohesion with other products or service users. Images and brands have been competitive advantages in the information age. Emotional values are related to customers' emotional experiences. Products and services are personalized for the

customers. As a competitive advantage, this is a unique experience. Creating positive emotional experiences demands customer experience systematic leading and long-term commitment. (Löytänä & Korhonen, 2014, 18-20.)

### 3.7 Customer experience

Good customer experience for the customer means efficiency, ease, and emotion (Korhonen, 2019, 49). Companies are concentrated to develop efficient and easy-to-use services for the customer. Efficiency can be considered as a company's internal functions and processes and ease is success to serve the consumer in the selected channel.

However, based on research 2/3 of customer experience is emotion. Generating an emotion is difficult. Emotion is individual and situation-dependent and it remains as a result after a customer encounter. (Korhonen, 2019, 51.)

According to research made by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) company, a good customer experience is made from speed, convenience, consistency, and friendliness (Clarke, 2018, 2). Good customer experience makes consumers feel heard, seen and appreciated (Clarke, 2018, 5). When people were asked: what they value most in the customer experience, the top three were efficiency, knowledgeable service, and convenience (Clarke, 2018, 6). According to Clarke, when people were asked: what they are worth paying more in the customer experience, the top three were efficiency, convenience, and friendly service (Clarke, 2018, 6).

### 3.8 Emotions

Emotion starts with stimulation. Stimulation can be a memory, picture, or encounter with another person. When the body reacts to the stimulations it can be shown for example as an increase in heart rate. Other physical reactions in person can be expressions, gestures, or positions. The feeling can last from seconds to minutes. Emotion is an emotional episode and feeling is part of it that person can identify and name. When something significant happens to a person emotions arise. The event is affected by a person's needs, goals, values, and well-being. Emotions prepare people



to deal with important events in life. Emotions have a strong motivational force that encourages a person to act or refrain from acting. (Killström, 2020, 18-19.)

Based on Killström arising emotions is easy because every encounter with another person arises emotions whether want to or not. From a customer experience point of view, it would be good to rise appropriate emotions, positive emotions in customer experience, and emotions that increase customer loyalty. (Killström, 2020, 32.)

Cap Gemini, Forrester, and Harvard Business Review have made studies where they have clarified which emotions increase customer loyalty. Based on the Cap Gemini study nine emotions that correlate most with customer loyalty are honesty, trust, uncompromisingness, togetherness, safety, familiarity, joy, gratitude, and compassion. Forrester the global market research company has made a study about customer experience and according to that six most important emotions from a customer experience point of view are being understood, confident, grateful, happy, respected, and valued. A study by Harvard Business Review shows that the emotions that create customer loyalty vary by industry, brand, and meeting point. The recommendation done by the Harvard Business Review study is that companies must know their customers and especially the most important customers of all and have a deep understanding of their needs and wishes to be able to find emotions that increase customer loyalty. (Killström, 2020, 70-71.)

Based on the Harvard Business review study points out that customers with whom there is a strong emotional connection are on average 52 percent more valuable than highly satisfied but not fully connected customers (Figure 8). Companies may focus on turning not-satisfied customers into satisfied ones, while according to this study it is more profitable to focus on satisfied customers and how to create a strong emotional connection with them. (Killström, 2020, 74-75.)

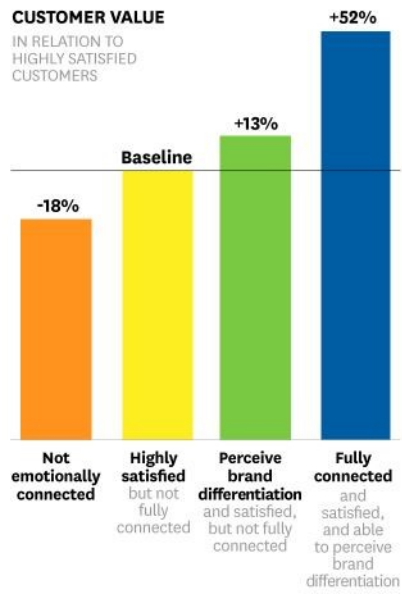


Figure 8. Customers with strong emotional connections are more valuable (Magids, et. all. 2015).

## 4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Current state of the flower course service

In this chapter, the research is conducted, and the research material is obtained. The research was done with the help of benchmarking, interviews with the commissioner and customers, a stakeholder map, observation, a survey, and an empathy map. The aim was to investigate the current state of the flower course service. Based on the research the current state of the customer experience was clarified.

### 4.2 Flower course benchmarking

With benchmarking it was intended to find out what kind of flower courses are arranged in 2022. At the same time benchmarking was used to clarify what kind of payment practices service providers are using and what kind of digital flower course supply exists. The aim of the benchmarking was to act also as an inspirational tool for developing the service. Benchmarking (Figure 9.) for this study was done among four flower course service providers in Finland and one in the United Kingdom. Benchmarked companies were selected on a flower course supply basis. Selected companies offered online and onsite flower courses and had flower course descriptions, lengths, prizes, and material information available on the web page. Benchmarking data was searched from each company's web page.

Benchmarking revealed that there are some differences in flower course names among flower course service providers. Service providers use names such as flower courses, flower workshops, Finnish term paja, and DIY (do it yourselves).

Three of the five companies have an online store where digital and onsite flower courses can be bought. Onsite course seats are reserved based on purchases from the online store. Two benchmarked companies have a policy, that if a course participant is unable to attend an on-site flower course, the fee will not be refunded. However, the participant has the opportunity to replace her seat with a substitute.

Three of the fourth benchmarked companies in Finland offer digital courses. Digital flower course content differs among benchmarked companies. As an example, the

Local Florist a side brand of Helmivillakko offers a digital DIY Dried Flower Wreath Kit, which includes dried flowers, a metallic wreath hoop, white floral tape, and a silk ribbon. On top of that tutorial video is provided free of charge on Instagram. The dried flower wreath kit can be purchased from an online store. The flower wreath can be done at any time with the help of a tutorial video. Local Florist provides flower wreath instructions and step-by-step pictures in the blog. The blog includes also special flower inspirations for the spring season festive. (Local Florist blog, 2021.)

Helmivillakko offers a DIY Kukkakimppu e-book, which includes instructions and pictures of how the flower bouquet can be done. The e-book can be bought from the company's online store. The flowers must be purchased separately, this does not include flowers. (Local Florist web shop, 2021.)

Moss & Stone Flower School from the UK offers a course named "A Summer Learning From Nature", which is an extensive online package including 30 videos and 17 downloadable PDFs. This course is a summer flower design from English country garden and flower artist's studio. Course enrollment can be bought from an online store. Learning materials can be seen on the www-page and materials are available after course enrollment and login. Flowers are not included in this course, they can be picked up from the garden, nature, or a flower store. (Moss & Stone, 2021.)

Benchmarked onsite courses vary from different levels of personnel flower courses to large group courses ordered for a special event. As an example from the onsite flower course, Kukkatehdas provides *Afterwork & Flowers* which includes onsite instructions, flowers, a glass of wine, and tapas. (Kukkatehdas, 2021.)

Service provider	Name and topic of the flower course	Content	Participants	Flower course type	Length of the course	Flower course price	Includes flowers	Registration practice	Online payment	Other: flower pickup, delivery, refreshments
Helmivillakko Tampere	Floral Basics - personal flower course for the beginners	Flower tying	personel	onsite	4h	485 €	yes	email	no	Includes lunch
Helmivillakko	Floral Luxury & Business - personal flower course for flower entrepreneurs, deepening flower course for flower entrepreneurs	Flower tying	personel	onsite	2 days	1 895 €	yes	email	no	Includes two lunches and two afternoon coffee
Helmivillakko	DIY Kukkakimppu e-book	Flower bouquet	personel	online	e-book	26,90 €	no	online store	online store	e-book with pictures
Local Florist - side brand of Helmivillakko	Instagram TV tutorial video for DIY Wreath Kit	Wreath	personel	online	6 minutes	free of charge	no	no registration needed	no	Instagram: IGTV
Local Florist - side brand of Helmivillakko	DIY Dried Flowers wreath kit	Wreath	personel	online	material	43 €	yes	online store	online store	Includes, dried flowers, metallic wreath hoop, white floral tape, silk ribbon
Arteflos Turku	Flower and styling course	Different kind of flower arrangement based on interest	5-30 person	onsite	3h	145€ + alv + 0,50 €/km	yes	orders via contact form	no	Course can be kept in customer premises or max 12 people in Arteflos premises.
Arteflos	Flower workshop - wreath	Wreath	10-60 person	onsite	1,5-2h	70€ + alv + 0,50 €/km	yes	orders via contact form	no	
Arteflos	Flower workshop - bouquet	Bouquet	10-60 person	onsite	1,5-2h	85€ + alv + 0,50 €/km	yes	orders via contact form	no	
Arteflos	Flower workshop - dried flowers still life	Dried flowers still life	10-60 person	onsite	1,5-2h	110€ + alv + 0,50 €/km	yes	orders via contact form	no	
Kukkatehdas Helsinki	Afterwork & Flowers: Dried flower wreath	Wreath	limited amount	onsite	not known	55 €	yes	online store	online store	Course is arranged in Leipätehdas. Glass of wine and tapas from Bruket kitchen. In the event of an obstacle, the fee will not be refunded.
Kukkatehdas	Flower workshop - Flower wreath	Wreath	personel	online	video record	40 €	yes	online store	online store	Customer will receive an email including password for the video. The video can be watched once. The video will work only on the agreed date. Customer can pick up the material package from the Flower Factory store or order it delivered home.
Rönsy Lempäälä	Flower workshop - Bouquet	Bouquet	min 5 person	onsite	2h	57 €	yes	email	no	Course is arranged in Virtakampus, kuvataideluokka. In the event of an obstacle, the fee will not be refunded.
Moss & Stone Flower School UK	Flower school: A Summer Learning From Nature. The Art of seasonal floral design with Brigitte Girling	Summer flower desing	personel	online		225£	no	online store	online store	Includes 30 videos and 17 downloadable pdf's.

Figure 9. Benchmarking of flower course services.

## Mood board from benchmarking

The mood board (Figure 10.) for this study was done for an entrepreneur for inspiration for the development ideas of the flower course. The inspirations generated in the benchmarking were collected on the mood board. With the help of the mood board, the insights expressed in benchmarking can be visually communicated. Moodboard presents the web store where the flower course can be bought. It presents the digital flower course tutorial which helps to do the DIY Wreath and an example picture of the flower bouquet material from the ebook. It shows a season-based flower course from an English garden and a season inspiration blog.

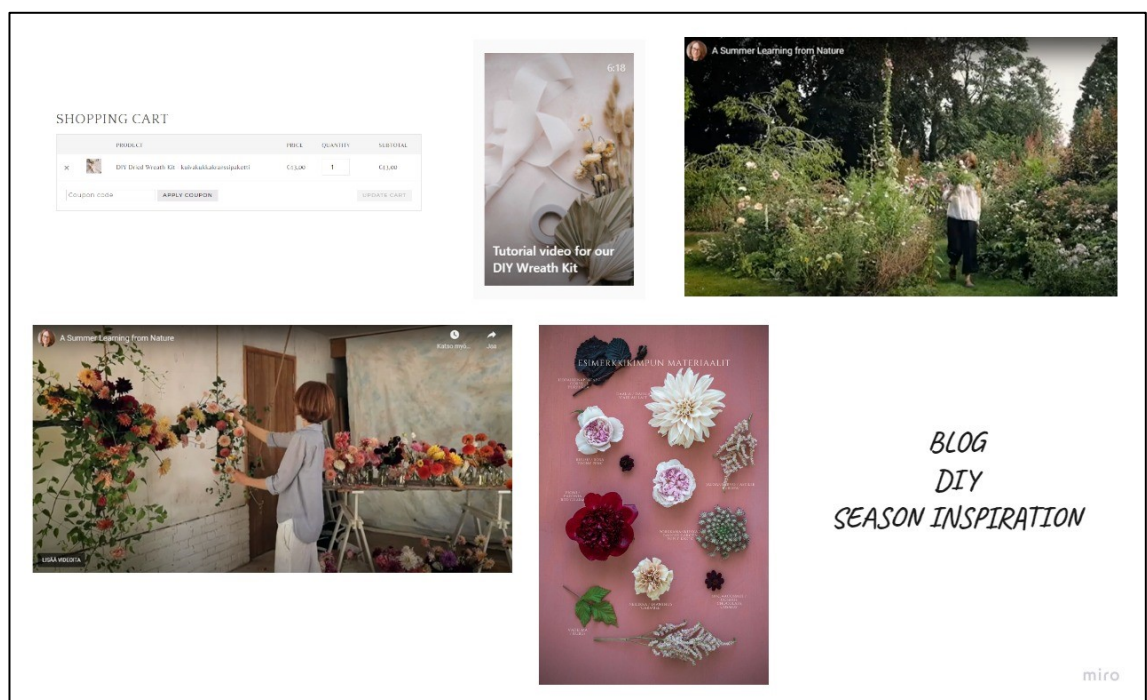


Figure 10. Moodboard from benchmarking (Local Florist, 2021; Moss & Stone, 2021).

### 4.3 Interview with an entrepreneur

The interview was held face-to-face on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2021 in the flower store. The participants were the thesis author and the entrepreneur. The interview was semi-structured. Questions were prepared beforehand. One aim of the interview was to get an understanding of the company's mission, vision, strategy, values, and emotions. The second aim of the interview was to get an understanding, what is the current state of the flower course service.

#### Definition of the current state

The company's mission is to provide flower services, interior decoration gifts, flower delivery, and flower courses. The company's vision is to follow dreams and grow safely. The company has grown moderately so far. The strategy is to continue growing moderately and speak about dreams. The entrepreneur reached her goals when she started talking out loud about her next dream. The second part of the strategy is that "good things happen when you try your best every day." (Personal communication with the entrepreneur 5th of April 2021.)

Company values are domesticity, local products, and ecology. In addition to this, one of the values of the entrepreneur is to support other local entrepreneurs in Pirkanmaa. Entrepreneur acquires all summer flowers and part of the year-round flowers from local gardens. Part of the interior decoration products is produced in Pirkanmaa. Flowers are wrapped in paper wrappers instead of cellophane. New organic products are starting to be available for flower-tying jobs and entrepreneur is testing them, for example, flower sponge. (Personal communication with the entrepreneur 5th of April 2021.)

The company mission, vision, strategy, and values are presented in Figure 11. The company's mission is to provide sweet things, which include flowers, interior decoration products, and course services. The company attempts to provide local and ecological products and materials. The vision of the company is to follow dreams and grow safely. An entrepreneur has noticed that when saying loud things, good things will happen and it is the company's strategy. (Personal communication with the entrepreneur 5th of April 2021.)



Figure 11. Company mission, vision, strategy, and values (Interview with the entrepreneur on 5th of April 2021).

The message of the entrepreneur’s brand crystallizes into two ideas: providing “sweet things” and doing all the flower tying with thought. Emotions play an important role in the flower business. Flowers are associated with several celebrations and their mood. Emotions like comfort, when the last greeting is given to a loved one at the grave, and on the other hand happiness, when the bride is living the happiest day of her life. When a company arranges flower courses, the emotion that the company strives for is a success. Flower courses are designed to provide students with a sense of success by learning something new.

#### Current state of the course services

Commissioner arranges flower courses regularly two times a week and every other week once a week. On top of this, there are custom flower courses ordered based on demand. Commissioner has had weeks with four flower courses. In these weeks



course load is heavy because courses are arranged in the evening when the flower store is closed. One flower course lasts for two hours, but the overall time per course including arrangements is approximately four hours. Commissioner thinks that the ideal course calendar on top of the flower store opening hours would be one course per week and every other week would be free from courses.

The flower store has room for 15 course participants. According to the entrepreneur, there is a maximum of 15 participants to make the group manageable. Covid19 has limited the course participants amount to 10 and six based on the prevailing Covid19 regulations. The minimum number of participants per course is five.

Commissioner has arranged one remote flower course via Facebook. Flower course students picked up their accessory packages from the flower store and after that, the course was kept alive on Facebook. The record from that course is available on Facebook and can be watched at any time. In easter time 2021, all courses needed to be canceled because of harder Covid19 regulations. Commissioner arranged an easter flower accessory package for all students who ordered one, and students were able to watch the recorded course from Facebook.

Commissioner thinks that one of the biggest challenges related to course activities is registration. Commissioner does not have any registration system in use. Students register via Facebook, Instagram, phone, or email. Some students do not use any social media. Course enrollments are difficult to manage, for example in case of cancellations. Commissioner has a continuous demand for courses with special orders. Companies are asking for courses for example for work well-being. Companies' well-being courses should be organized during the store opening hours, but the commissioner cannot close the store and has to refuse to take those flower course orders at the moment.

#### 4.4 Flower courses and flower seasons

Because of the covid19 restrictions, flower courses could not be arranged. During the flower season, such as Christmas and Mother's Day, the entrepreneur cannot organize courses. Although the flower courses are in high demand at Christmas they cannot be held very close to Christmas because the shop is full of flowers and all resources are reserved for Christmas flower works. Flower seasons bring in most of the turnover and take away all the resources from the entrepreneur therefore entrepreneur will organize courses between the flower seasons. (Personal communication with the entrepreneur 5th of April 2021.)

##### 4.4.1 Stakeholder map

The stakeholder map presented in Figure 12 illustrates the people and organizations which are related to the service. The internal stakeholder is the entrepreneur who is providing the course service. The entrepreneur is providing the flower course service by herself. An internal stakeholder is placed at the center of the map. Connected stakeholders have a direct connection to the entrepreneur. Flower course participants are the customers which are buying the flower course service from the entrepreneur. Flower season is an important subject for the entrepreneur. Entrepreneur's main sale is done during the flower seasons. The main flower seasons are Easter, Mother's day, and Christmas. During flower seasons entrepreneur is fully employed and she can not organize flower courses. External stakeholders are an employee who is working in the flower shop, other flower course service providers, partners, flower suppliers, and regulations. Regulations are affecting the flower course service. If there are restrictions on public events that will affect how many people are allowed to gather. For example during Covid19 pandemic restrictions were strict. Public events were forbidden or at some point, they were allowed to be organized if under 10 people were in the event.

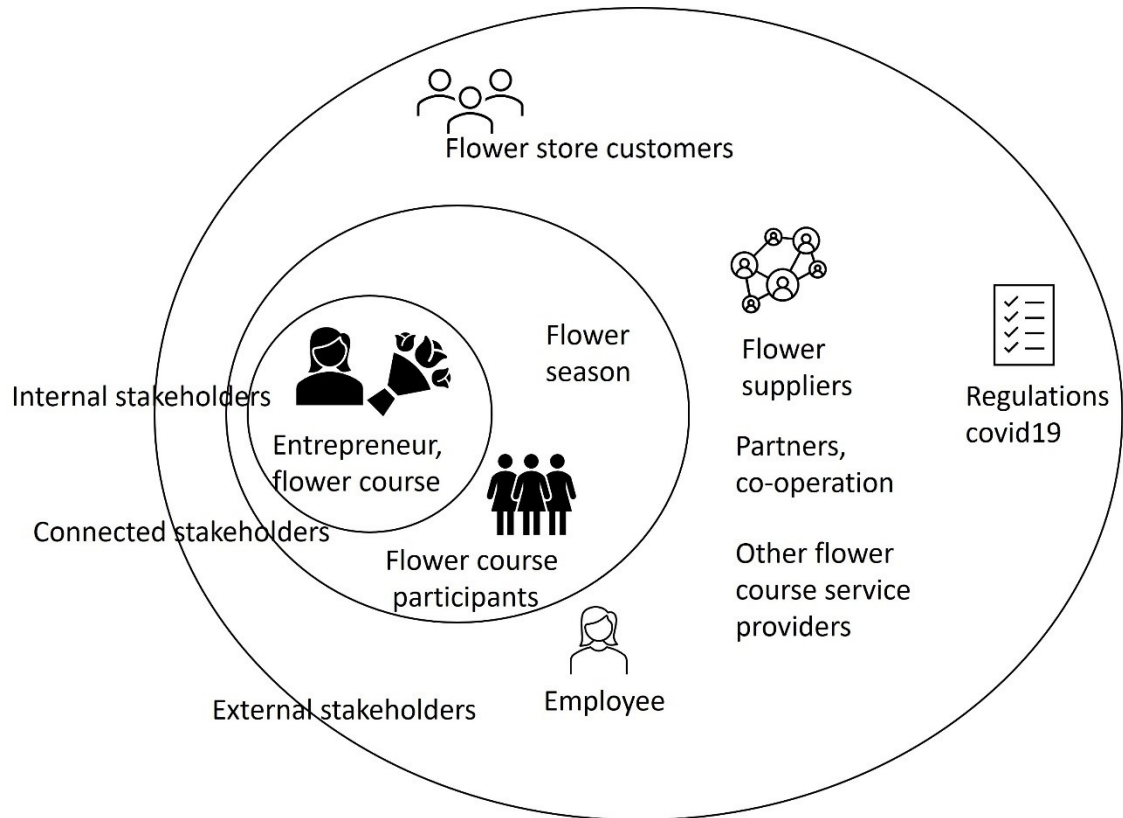


Figure 12. Stakeholder map of flower course service.

#### 4.4.2 Flower course observation

Observation for this study was done in the commissioner's shop. The observation aimed to familiarize the researcher with the flower course content and get information about the flower course participants. The observation was done as a non-participant observation. The researcher was sitting and doing notes in the same room as the flower course participants.

The flower course about the dried flower wreath was held in February 2022. It had nine participants and the florist according to the covid19 instructions. All the participants were women. The flower course started with an introduction to the topic. The first florist showed earlier examples of wreaths from the computer. When the topic and examples were presented, florists introduced recommended ways of working, tools, and materials. After that course participants started to work. No one from the course participants have done a dry flower wreath earlier. Participants started to collect materials and design their wreaths. In the beginning, questions were asked on how to start the wreath, what materials can be tied, and what materials are better to put with

glue. From the beginning, the atmosphere was focused and relaxed all the way to the end. There were some individual discussions and laughs during the event, but most of the time there was complete silence in the course premise. The silence and total focus among participants were quite surprising to the observer.

The first participant was ready 30 minutes before the end time. Wreaths were admired, the remaining materials were put in place and gradually all participants completed the wreath. One participant wanted to buy flowers after completing her wreath and the florist was serving her. No additional sales were advertised during the course. It is completely understandable. During the course, serving customers and spending time on selling flowers is out of guiding and helping course participants.

#### 4.4.3 Survey

The purpose of the survey was to gain an understanding of the current flower course service. The survey was arranged in February 2022, at the same time with the observation. The survey included closed questions and open questions. The survey found out where the participant gets course information, how satisfied the participant was with the course, the flower course experience from Elovainion kukka, and how likely the participants are to recommend this course to a friend. These questions were closed questions. Feeling after the course experience and future flower course hopes were asked with open questions. Open questions were set, because there was no desire to give ready-made answers to these questions. Participants answered the survey directly after the flower course. A digital online survey was printed for the flower course participants and given to them right away when they finished their flower work. This way researcher try to avoid any hassle with the mobile phones, numbers, and survey links and ensure that feelings were fresh and were obtained immediately after the end of the course. The survey was anonymous. The researcher entered the answers in a Google form and exported the results to Excel.

Qualitative metrics determine the customer's experiences of encounters. Question: How likely are you to recommend this course to a friend, provides the likelihood of referring a company on a scale of 0 (not at all likely) to 10 (extremely likely). NPS (Net promoter score) responses (Figure 13.) are placed into three categories: Detractors, Passives, or Promoters. Detractors answers from 0 to 6, Passives from 7 to 8, and Promoters answer from 9 to 10. (Korkiakoski, 2019. 66.)



$$\%Promoters - \%Detactors = NPS$$

Figure 13. Net promoter score (based on Korkiakoski, 2019).

When measuring emotion, answering should be easy and intuitive. The emotional experience lasts only a moment so it should be measured at that moment or as soon as possible after that. One simple and easy way to measure emotions is to describe emotion in one word, which is used in this survey. (Killström, 2020. 128-129.)

#### Analysis of responses

A total of 18 respondents answered the survey. 39 percent got the flower course information from Facebook and 28 percent from Instagram. Other responses revealed that flower course information was got from a friend (three), sister (two), or daughter (one). A summary of responses can be found in Figure 14.

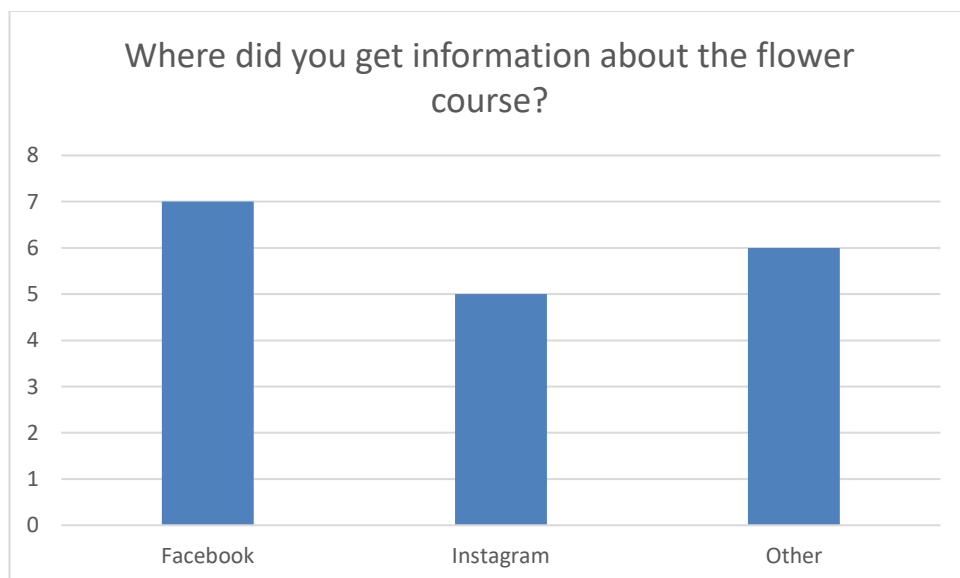


Figure 14. Flower course information.

Participants were asked about the previous flower course experience from Elovainion kukka and 15 participants had under five previous courses. One participant had attended 5-10 courses and two participants had attended more than ten courses. (Figure 15.)

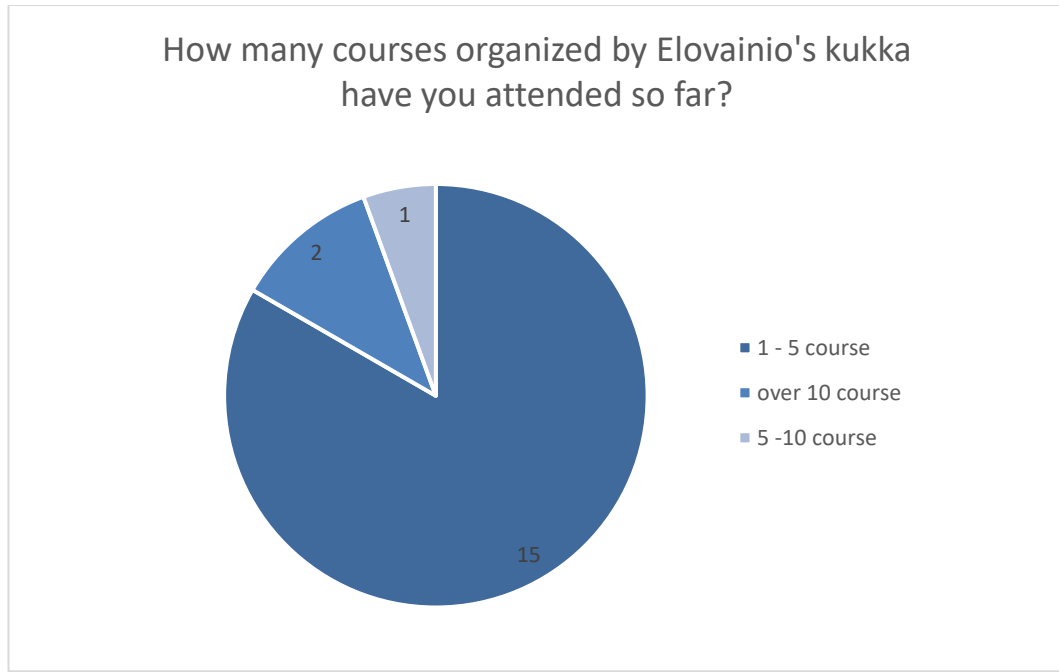


Figure 15. Previous flower course participation of clients in Elovainio's kukka.

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with to flower course service. The scale of responses was from one to five. 94% of customers were extremely satisfied with the flower course and 6 percent (one customer) very satisfied. (Figure 16.)

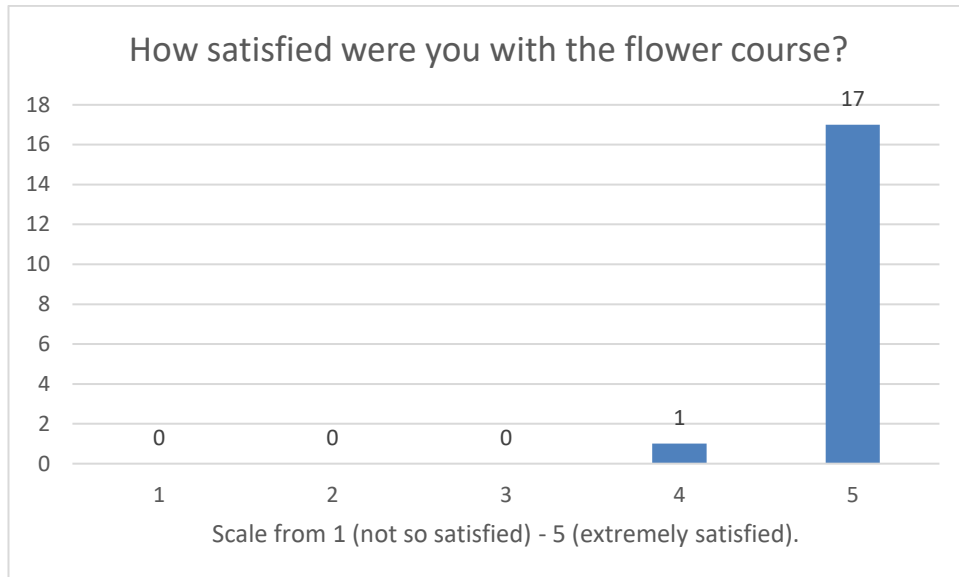


Figure 16. Customer satisfaction with the flower course taken.

Survey respondents were asked to describe their feeling in one word after the flower course. Three customers were cheerful, three customers were enthusiastic, two relaxed and two were pleased. Emotions which were mentioned once were calm and relaxed, creative and nice, delighted, happy, inspired, nice, proud, and successful. All emotions from responses were very positive. (Figure 17.)

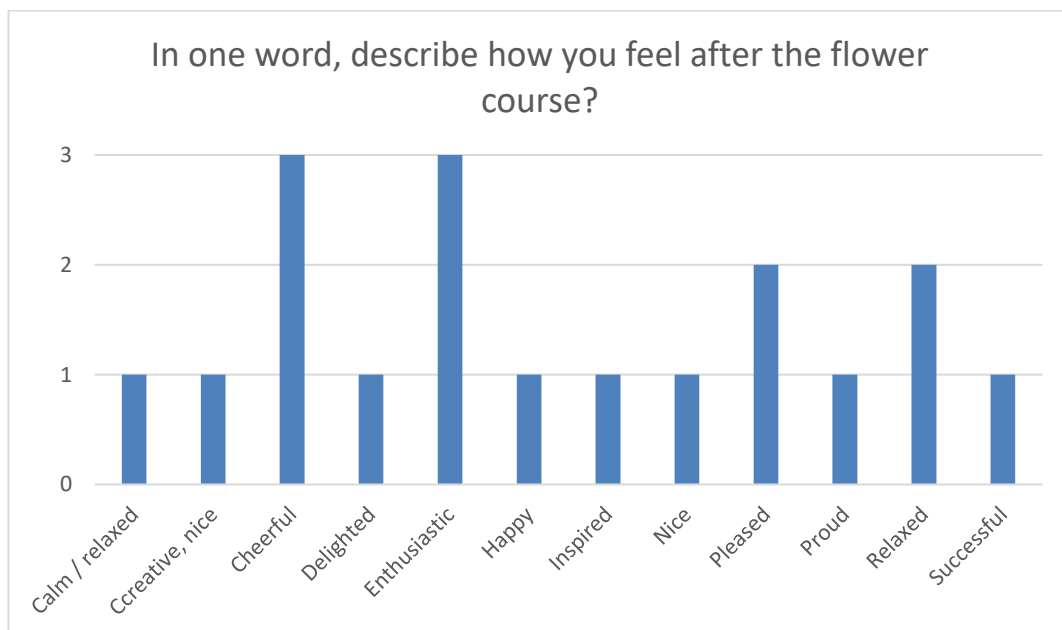


Figure 17. Emotions after the flower course.

Emotions are presented also in the word cloud in Figure 18. The biggest words in a word cloud are those emotions that got the most results.

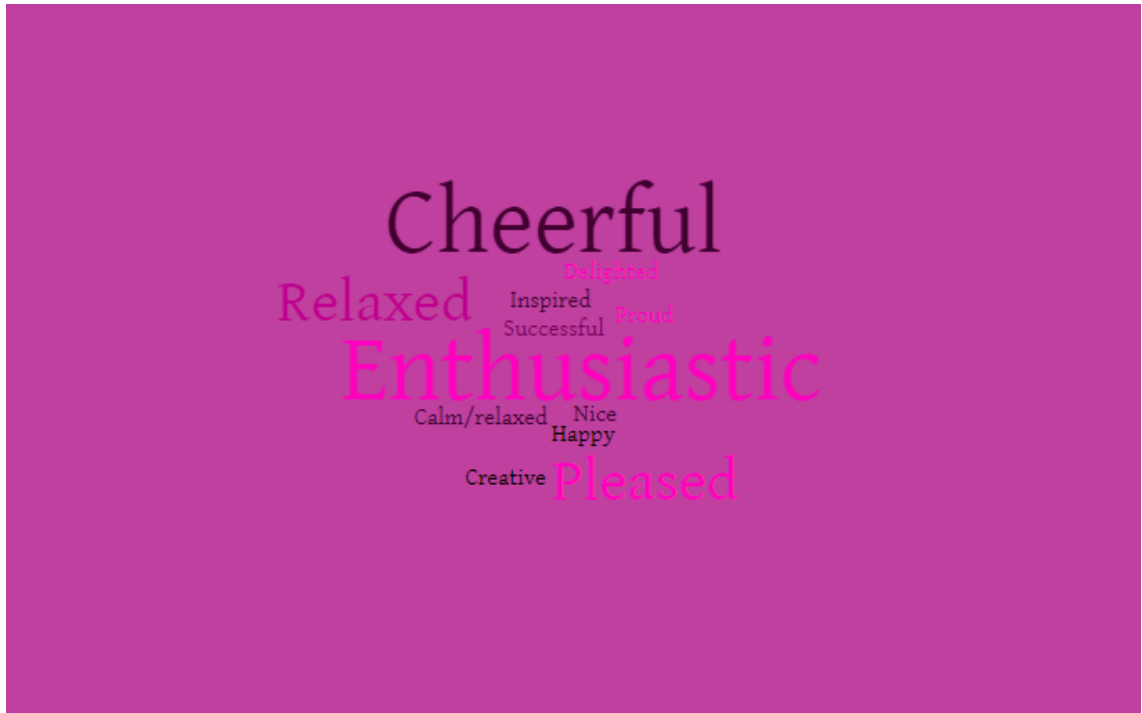


Figure 18. Word cloud from emotions after the flower course.

Customers were asked how likely they are to recommend this course to their friends. 83% of customers answered 10 and 17% answered 9 on a scale of 0-10. 100% of the customers were promoters. There were no customers who belonged to the detector 0-6) or passive (7-8) group. Net Promoter Score was calculated by promoters in percent minus detectors in percent as stated before in the Figure 13. Because there were no detectors, the calculated Net Promoter score was 100. The Net Promoter score cannot be any better.



Finally, the respondents were asked how often they shop in Elovainio's kukka. One customer shop in Elovainio's kukka several times a month. Five customers shop approximately once a month. 12 flower course customers shop rarely in Elovainio's kukka. (Figure 19.)

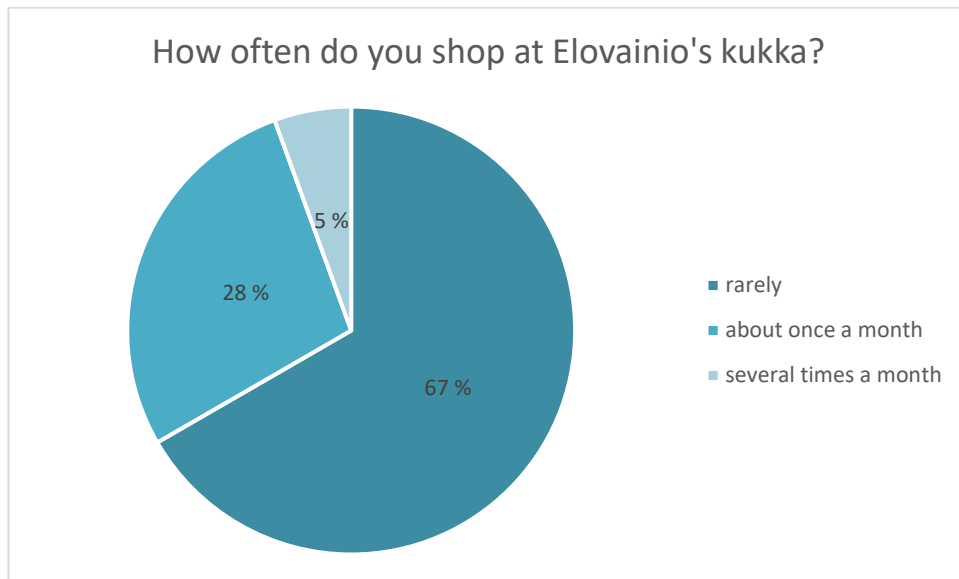


Figure 19. The number of purchases made by the participant in the flower course.

#### 4.4.4 Dialogue interviews

Dialogue interviews were conducted in February 2022. They were done before flower course and during the flower course. Because evening was already late when the flower course was ending, interviews were no longer conducted after the flower course. All together three dialogue interviews were done. Each interview lasted under five minutes. Dialogue interviews were recorded on the mobile phone and permission to record was asked from the interviewees.

Dialogue interviews were semi-structured. The interview frame was divided into two parts motivation and expectations for the coming flower course and future hopes for the flower courses. The dialogue interviews aimed to deepen the data that was got with the survey. The data from interviews is used for creating Personas.

When asking motivations why interviewees were registered for this specific course. Two of the interviewees had a friend who had found this course and they registered together. One interviewee's daughter had informed about the course and sent a registration link to the interviewee. No one had done this kind of wreath earlier. Two interviewees had been earlier in the flower course organized by Elovainio's kukka. One had no experience with flower courses. All interviewees found it easy to register for this flower course. Expectations for the flower course were flower therapy, clearing the mind, and concentrating for two hours only on flowers. One interviewee wanted to get knowledge and skills that she can use later for this kind of flower work so that she does not need to look for help from the internet.

When asked about their hopes for future flower courses two interviewees told that they wanted to participate in all kinds of flower courses. Based on the interviews the flower course content does not matter participants wanted to work with the flowers and participate in the flower course with their friends. One interviewee was able to describe more specific flower course hopes such as a Christmas flower course, a wreath of conifers, and a dried flower course. Two interviewees wanted information from further courses on Instagram and one interviewee wanted to get an advertising email for upcoming flower courses.

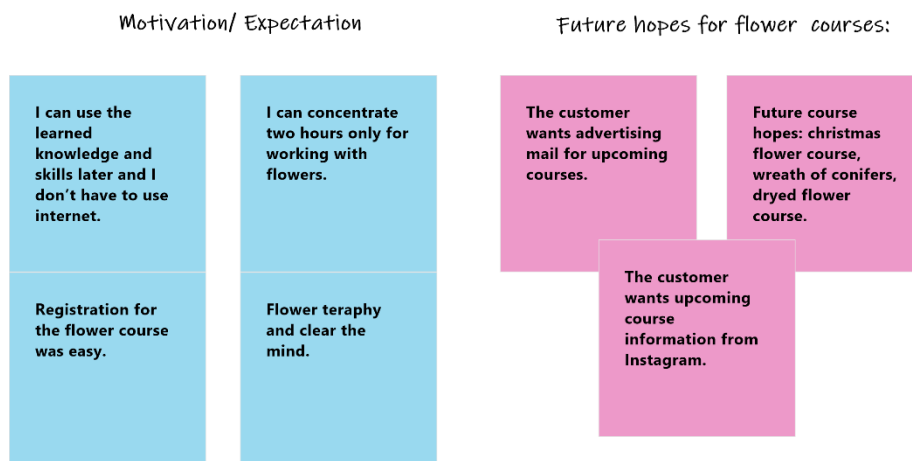


Figure 20. Research data wall from the dialogue interviews.

#### 4.4.5 Empathy map for flower course service

An empathy map was made based on the data gathered. The researcher analyzed the gained experiences and data from the questionnaires, observations, and interviews. An empathy map consists of six areas goal, see, say, do, hear, think, and feel. The researcher defined the empathy map in this order and answered the questions about the role of the flower course customer. The common understanding about the flower course customer was established based on the questions in each area of the empathy map. Created empathy map canvas provides compressed visual reference to the flower course customer. A summary of an empathy map for the flower course service is presented in Figure 21.

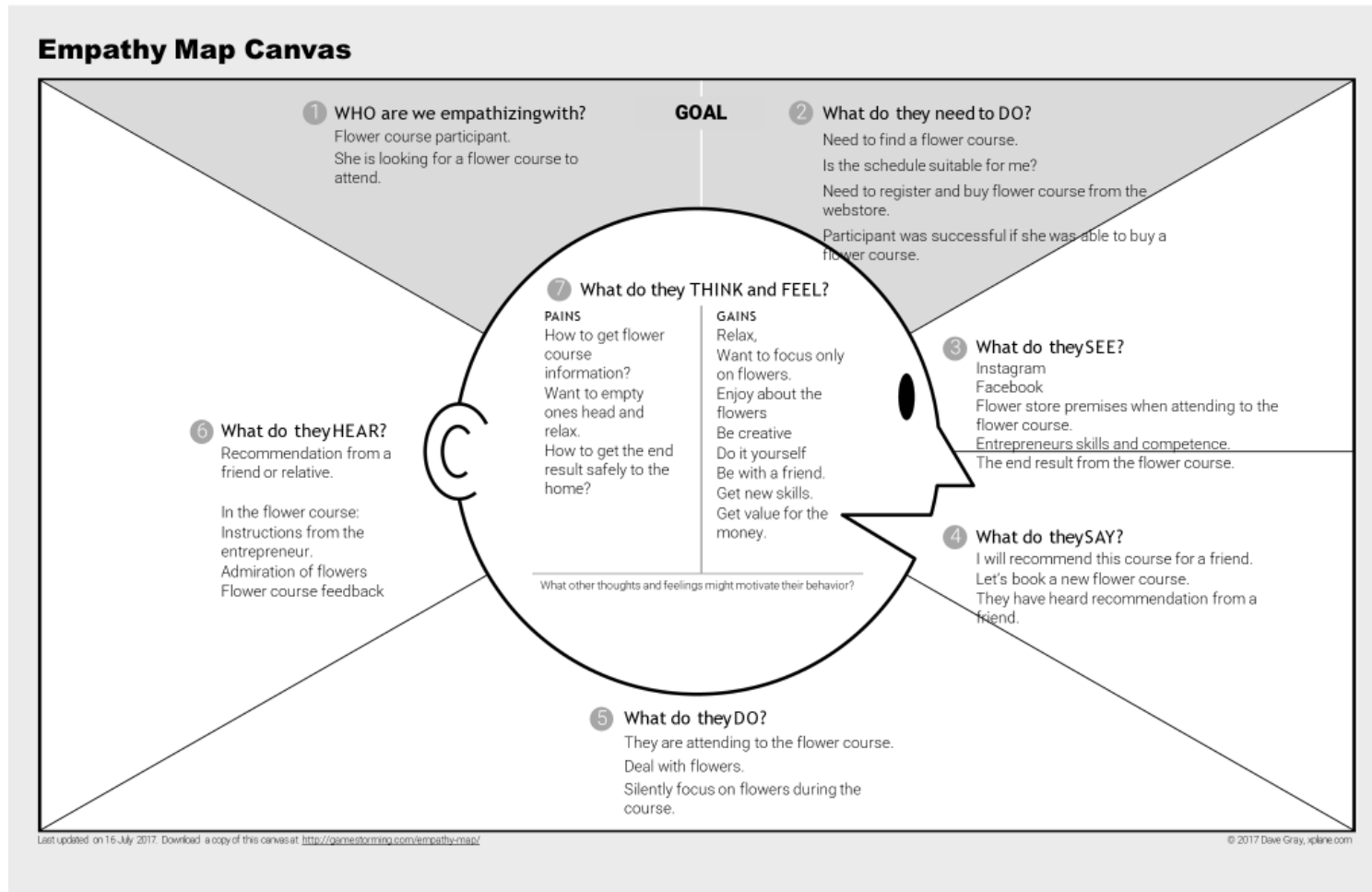


Figure 21. Empathy Map Canvas.

## 5 IDEATION AND DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1 Deeper insight to customer experience

Research data collection and data analysis provided information on the current situation of the flower course and some insights into customer understanding. In the ideation phase, this data is used to create personas, a customer journey map, a value proposition canvas, a business model canvas, and a service blueprint.

The ideation and developing phase goal is to get a deeper insight into the customer experience using service design tools. With the help of these service design tools, the aim was to find an answer to the research question “How the current flower course service can be developed?”.

The first step in the ideation and developing phase is to create personas. A customer journey map was created based on the personas. Value proposition canvas's main purpose is to crystalize the value for the customer. Value proposition canvas is used as the basis of the business model canvas. The whole flower course service is broken down into activities and is visually shown in the service blueprint.

### 5.2 Personas

Personas (Figure 22, Figure 23, and Figure 24) were created based on the data gathered by questionnaires for the flower course participants, the flower course observation, dialogue interviews during the flower course, and an empathy map. In addition to these sources of information, personas are based on co-design with the entrepreneur. Co-design target was to get the improved knowledge of the customers. Co-design session was done on 17.11.2023. Personas are visual tools to present customers concretely. Personas cover typical flower course customers. Personas do not represent any customer specifically. They are fictive and a combination of several customers. The personas describe expectations for the course and motivation. Concrete personas create empathy and understanding toward the customer. (Stickdorn et. al. 2018, 40-41.)

## Persona Susanna

Susanna is 28 years old. She has registered for the flower course with her friend. Susanna is following Elovainion kukka on Instagram and noticed a new course from there. She has attended a couple of times before to Elovainion kukka flower course. During the flower course, Susanna wants to focus on flowers and does not want to think about anything else. She does not want to think about work or things at home. She wants to have a common time with her friend and seeks relaxation from the flower course.



*"I want to focus on flowers and relax."*

### Susanna

Susanna is 28 years old. She is following Elovainion kukka in Instagram and noticed flower course from there. Susanna is attending to the flower course with her friend.

Her expectations for flower course are that she wants to focus on the flowers and relax during the course. She has attended couple of times to the flower course before.

Susanna is ready to recommend this course for her friends and is very pleased to the course content.

She shops in Elovainion kukka less often than once a month.

**Motivation**

- Want to spend time together with a friend
- Wants to focus only on the flowers during the course and not think about anything else.

Figure 22. Persona Susanna.

## Persona Kirsi

Kirsi is 55 years old. She is attending the course with her daughter. Kirsi is not registered on Instagram nor following the Elovainion kukka from Facebook. Kirsi got information about the flower course from her adult daughter. Her daughter sent a link to the webstore and Kirsi bought the course from there. Flower course registration and payment were easy. Kirsi wants to be creative and do it yourself. She wants to learn new skills with the flowers and test those by herself in her own time. In the future, Kirsi wants to have new flower course information via email.



*"I want to learn and be creative."*

### Kirsi

Kirsi is 55 years old. Kirsi is attending first time to the flower course. She is attending to the course with her daughter. Her daughter send her information about the course and a link for the flower course registration.

Kirsi wants to learn skills in the course that she can use later for her own flower bindings. The course offers her creative work that she enjoys greatly.

In the future she wants to learn how to do a wreath of conifers. She would like to receive ads about the flower courses via email. Kirsi is ready to recommend this course for her friends.

She shops in Elovainion kukka less often than once a month.


**Motivation**

- Do it yourself and be creative
- Flower therapy
- Want to use the knowledge later for her own flowers

Figure 23. Persona Kirsi.

## Persona Laura

Laura is 45 years old. She is a heavy user of flower courses. She works as a nurse but has a dream to be a florist in the future. She is attending the flower course alone or sometimes with a friend. She follows the Elovainion kukka on Instagram and got information about the new flower course from there. Flower course registration and payment were easy in the webstore. Laura is already quick in tying flowers but wants to practice and learn new techniques in the flower course. Laura ties flowers in her free time. She does flower bouquets and flower tyings for her friends and relatives. Laura has attended flower courses for several years and has recommended courses to her friends.



*"I want to be a florist."*

### Laura

Laura is 45 years old. Laura is heavy user of flower courses. She has experience in tens of flower courses during several years. Laura is following Elovainion kukka in Facebook.

Laura wants to deepen her skills and learn new flower tying technics. Laura enjoys flowers and does flower tyings in her freetime. Laura ties flowers for her friends and relatives. She is a nurse, but dreams of retraining as a florist. Laura has recommended flower courses to her friends.

She shops in Elovainion kukka less often than once a month.

**Motivation**

- Maintain and learn new skills
- Loves flowers
- She is considering to retrain herself to a florist.

Figure 24. Persona Laura.



### 5.3 Customer journey map

The customer journey map creates an understanding for the researcher about the current customer experience and status of the flower course service. (Stickdorn et. al. 2018, 43-46.) The customer journey map (Figure 25.) was done based on created personas Susanna, Kirsi, and Laura. Because there was so not much difference between personas, customer journeys were combined on the same map. The customer journey map brings out the user action, customer experience, and emotional journey in the touchpoints with the flower course service. Touchpoints are divided into five steps awareness, before service, service, after service, and advocacy. Persona Susanna noticed the information about the flower course on Instagram. All the personas make the reservation and payment in the web store. On the flower course, day customers arrive at the company premises and experience the flower course service. During the service, the customer is focused on the flowers and enjoying the time with the flowers. Persona Kirsi experiences the flower course time to flower therapy. Doing things with her own hands and creativity makes Kirsi feel enthusiastic. After the service customers are feeling successful with the results and enjoy those still at home. Persona Susanna and persona Kirsi were ready to recommend the course to their friend after attending the flower course.

One pain point in the customer journey was pointed out. Persona **Kirsi** was not aware of the flower course service at all. She was aware of the flower course through her daughter. The daughter sent her a direct link to the course registration. In the future, she would like to have an email advertisement about the coming flower courses.






STAGE	AWARENESS	BEFORE SERVICE	SERVICE	AFTER SERVICE	ADVOCACY
USER ACTION	Seeks information about available flower courses.	Gets recommendation from the friend or relative.	Arrives to the company premises.	Enjoys about the end result at home. Uses the knowledge she has learned herself.	Recommends the service to the friend, sister, mother.
TOUCHPOINTS	Company Instagram	Makes a reservation in web store.	Experiences the flower course service.	Reserves the next flower course.	Shares the experience with the friends and relatives.
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	Customer do not have knowledge about the coming flower course.	Registration and payment are easy.	Focuses on flowers, enjoys own time and creativity.	Feelings of success.	Is the experience as good in the next time?
EMOTIONAL JOURNEY	Interested 	Curious 	Enthusiastic 	Cheerful 	Pleased 

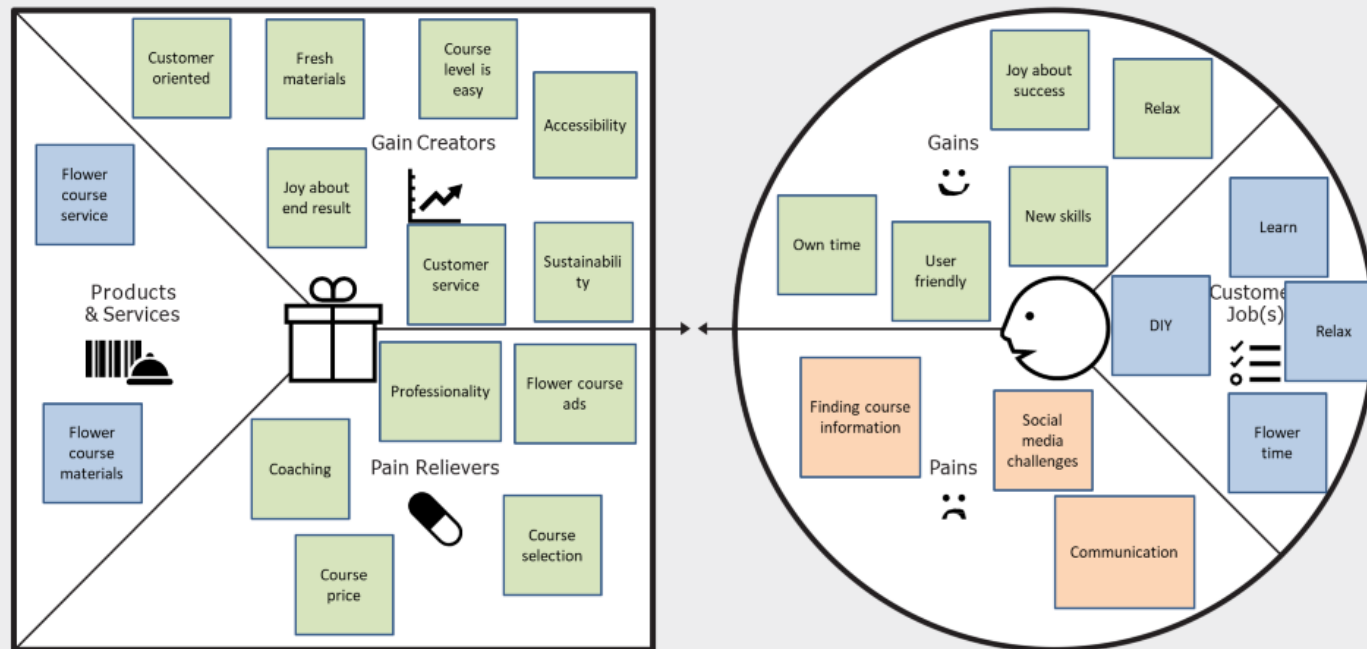
Figure 25. Customer journey map.

#### 5.4 Value proposition canvas

Value proposition canvas (Figure 26.) was created based on the research data. Canvas has two sides the customer side and the value proposition side. Canvas was started from the right side. The first step in the value proposition canvas was to think about what needs the customer has, and what the customer wants to achieve and based on that full fill the customer's jobs. The next step was to think about customer experiences of pains and gains before, during, and after the service.

The left side of the canvas was filled first with the products and services offered. After that, it was determined how the products and services create value by creating customer gain or killing customer pains in left side of the canvas. Customer had challenge to find information about the flower course from social media channels. Improving customer communication by informing customers about upcoming flower courses could relieve that pain. Gain creators for customers are that flower course is accessible, flower course level is easy, and everyone can feel success about the result. Gain creator which creates joy for the customers is that flowers are fresh. Sustainable gain creators are that local gardens are preferred, and flowers are wrapped to paper.

## The Value Proposition Canvas



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Figure 26. Value proposition canvas.

## 5.5 Business model canvas

A business model canvas from the flower course service point of view was created based on the research phase and ideation and developing phase together with a commissioner in cocreation session 17.11.2023. A business model canvas helps to create an overall picture of the service, its resources, costs, customer segments, value proposition, and partners.

The value proposition for the Elovainion kukka flower course service is to provide flower course service without the previous experience needed. Everyone can challenge themselves and influence the level of requirements themselves. The company's value propositions are taken into account in the flower courses whenever possible. Elovainion kukka value propositions are ecology, favoring domesticity and local products. Customers' needs are satisfied with the flower course service, learning, relaxing, having own time with the flowers, and creating with own hands. The most important customer segments are women aged 30-60 years. Key resources for the flower course service are knowledge of the florist, flower store, and materials for the flower course. Key partners for the commissioner are other florists and flower stores. Key channels for customer interactions are Instagram, Facebook pages, online store, and www-pages.

Based on the demand for the flower course, the price for the flower course is right from the customer's point of view. All the flower courses for the rest of 2022 were sold out. In the quiet period of flower season, flower course service brings significant revenue for the commissioner. The cost structure of the service consists partly of the company's cost structure. The most expensive fixed cost is flower store rent where the courses are organized. Flower course material costs depend on the subject of the course. Maintenance costs are the online store, electricity, and water for the rented facility. Variable costs are flower course advertising and marketing, which are done mainly by the entrepreneur through social media channels. The business model canvas is presented in Figure 27.

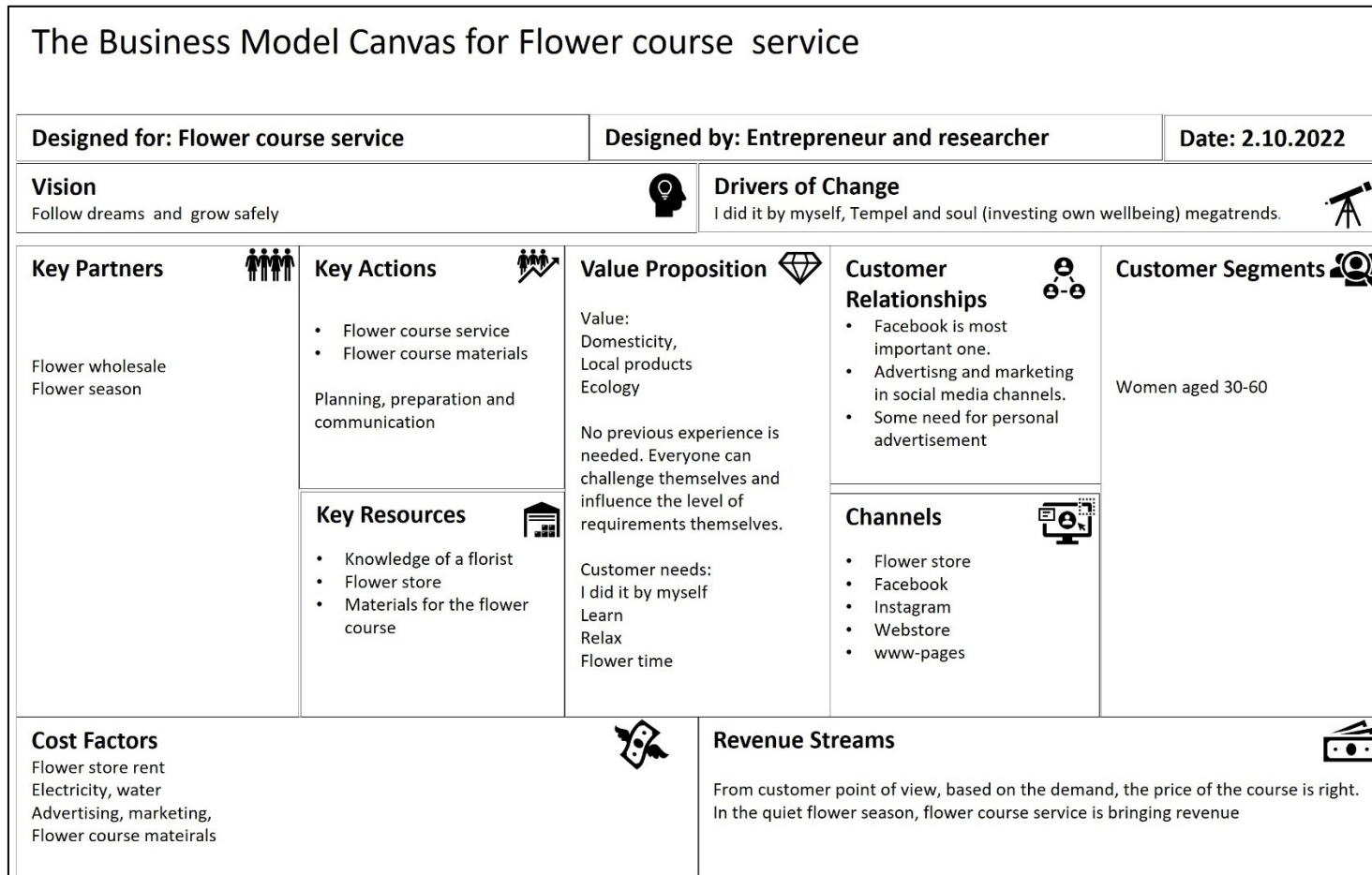


Figure 27. Business model canvas.

## 5.6 Service Blueprint

A service blueprint was created to get an overall picture of the flower course service (Figure 28.). The service blueprint helps to visualize functions before the service, during the service, and after the service.

During the preservice, the customer has a need for a flower course. Customers search for flower course information on the internet, or they got a recommendation from a relative or a friend. Elovainion kukka shares information from coming flower courses on Instagram, Facebook, and the company web page. The Facebook event includes the most detailed information about the course and a link to the online reservation system. Instagram includes the online reservation system link but does not have as detailed information about the course event as Facebook. The instructor of the flower course is the entrepreneur/florist herself. Florist updates the latest flower course schedule to social media applications herself. Flower course customer makes binding course reservation and flower course payment through an online reservation system. Before the flower course, florists purchase the flower course-specific materials from flower wholesale. Depending on the course, materials might need some special handling or treatment. Just before the course can start, flower course materials and flower store must be prepared for the customers.

During the service, customers arrive and park their cars in front of the flower shop. Customers enter the store and select their working places from the flower shop. The florist gives the introduction to the flower course theme and shows materials and techniques on how to proceed with the work. Customers collect the materials for their work and may ask for help and support for their choices. During the flower course, customers may ask questions and the florist helps and shares her expertise on the topic. When customers are ending the binding work, the florist helps to finish the binding work if help is needed at the end. When the flower course works are finished, florist takes a group photo of the participants with the flower course work. After flower works are packed, some customers are looking for impulse buys from the flower store. The Flower course is already paid for during the course registration, so there is no need to cash customers at this phase. However, some customers want to buy some small things for the home at the end of the course.

After the service florist updates social media channels with a group photo of the latest flower course with the results and photos from the course. Between the courses florist updates social media channels with updates on upcoming flower courses. Between the flower courses, there is no direct contact between the commissioner and the customer. After the service customers recommend the flower course service to their relatives and friends.

SERVICE BLUEPRINT		PRESERVICE						DURING SERVICE						AFTER SERVICE		
F R O N T S T A G E	Visualisation of the service landscape															
	Physical	Online	Online, personal communication	Online service	Flower wholesale	Flower shop	Flower shop							Flower shop	Online	Online/personal communication
	Customer / User actions	Search flower course information	Recommendation from previous customer	Book and pay the course			Greet	Listen the introduction	Collect the material	Ask questions	Bind flowers	Finish and pack the work	Look around the store and look for impulse buys	Thanks and goodbyes	Follow the Instagram, Facebook.	Recommend the service
Line of interaction		Service provider's actions / online actions	Update Instagram, Facebook, web-pages and web store		Flower course available in web store		Prepare the flower store for the course	Greet	Give the introduction, show materials and technique	Help and support	Share own expertise	Help and support	Support	Get the payment from impulse buys	Thanks and goodbyes. Clean and organize the flower store premises.	
Line of visibility		Service provider's actions	Plan new flower courses and schedule			Purchase materials for the flower course	Prepares materials								Updates social media channels, Instagram, Facebook.	Plans customer relationship management
B A C K S T A G E	Support	Web store														
	Network				Flower wholesale											

Figure 28. Service blueprint.



### 5.7 Flower course service pain points

By looking at the research results, it was found some pain points and development targets in the contact points of the service. Pain point related to course advertisement is described in the customer journey and the value proposition canvas. Research results revealed that some customers who were not aware of flower courses would like to get an email advertisement about future flower courses. Some customers are not following so actively on Facebook or Instagram and customers may pass the latest flower courses.

During the observation, a researcher noticed that at the end of the course some customers were looking for impulse purchases, but the florist was busy helping course participants to finish their work. Since it was already late, the customers did not want to prolong the evening and wait for the service and pay for impulse purchases instead they left the flower store without impulse purchases.

At the very beginning of the study when the benchmark was done the commissioner had a problem with the flower course registrations. Flower course registrations were coming with the phone and emails and registration and answering takes a lot of the commissioner's time. Flower course cancelations were difficult and time-consuming to handle for the commissioner.

### 5.8 Summary of results

This subchapter summarizes the most important observations and points that emerged from the analysis of the research results. Based on research results, flower course customers' need to relax, learn, do it by themselves, have their own time with the flowers, and be creative are consistent with consumer trends. The consumer trend "I did it by myself" bring up increased interest in handicrafts and the consumer trend "temple of body and soul" brings up increased consumer need for mental well-being. The flower course service is satisfying customer interest in handicrafts and for mental well-being. The research results reveal the customers' emotions after the flower course service. Based on the emotions described it can be said that the customer experience

has been successful. Overall satisfaction with the flower course is very good, as well as the answer to the question of how likely it is to recommend the course to a friend.

The research results revealed only one pain point of the service, the promotion of new courses. The second pain point was the challenge to handle impulse purchases after the flower course. The third pain point concerned the commissioner's time to handle flower course registrations, payments, and cancellations. Commissioner brought this problem up when starting the study, so this pain point was already known when this study started. The third pain point was resolved after benchmarking by adding the flower courses to the online store. The customer survey was done after this and it did not reveal any problems with the online registration and payment.

## 6 DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS

### 6.1 Development during the study

The commissioner had a development suggestion about the flower course registration when this study was started and the commissioner met in the spring of 2021. Commissioner started the flower course development right after the benchmarking of this study was done. Commissioner opened a new online store and all flower course registration and payment were put into that. Commissioner updates new flower courses for the online store. After the new online store customer purchases, the flower course from the online store, and registration and payment is handled there. Commissioner does not have to handle flower course emails, phone calls, cancellations, and waiting places.

### 6.2 Further development proposals

The researcher was visiting the company's home pages in autumn 2022 and noticed that the flower course information there is out of date. The commissioner should update the home pages and put the link to the new online store where the latest flower course selection is available.

Not all customers found new information about upcoming flower courses. The flower course email advertisement was suggested by the customer. This could be implemented easily because customer email addresses are collected during the registration. A new flower course calendar email could be sent to the old customers when new courses are planned and updated in the online store. Commissioner has a positive problem with flower courses, all flower courses are quite soon sold out after publishing to the online store. In principle, the flower course advertisement is not needed at the moment for their sale. However, the email advertisement could be worth considering for regular customer relationships. An improvement suggestion is to plan customer communication and customer relationship management. By sending regular emails to customers, customers will get the information about the upcoming flower courses, it will create possibility to include targeted advertisements to emails and will remind customers about the existence of the flower shop.

Because the demand for flower courses is high, one suggestion for the future could be to sell digital courses in an online store. The flower course should be planned so that the flower course material package could be picked up from the flower store. Fresh flowers are a challenging material for this kind of digital course where the demand is not known beforehand. Instructions could be in digital format or manual instructions. Access rights and time availability for the digital course training material need to take into account to avoid digital training material spreading without compensation. The good side of the digital course is that when the training material has been created no time is needed to keep the course and material packages can be created according to demand.

Although the demand for flower courses is high and basically, all flower courses are sold out, measuring, monitoring, and developing the customer experience should be continuous. The operating environment and customer behavior are changing rapidly. With a continuous measurement of customer experience, changes can be noticed quicker.

Gathering customer feedback should be easy, and monitoring it and developing should be self-evident. By asking for customer feedback after each course, analyzing the feedback, and taking action, continuous development can be maintained. For example, cloud service providers offer free services for surveys and data collection. A short customer survey can be done example with a tablet or phone after each course and analyzing results and taking action the next day. This way, the customer can be understood better and react to changes in the customer experience. The continuous measuring and improvement process is presented in Figure 29.

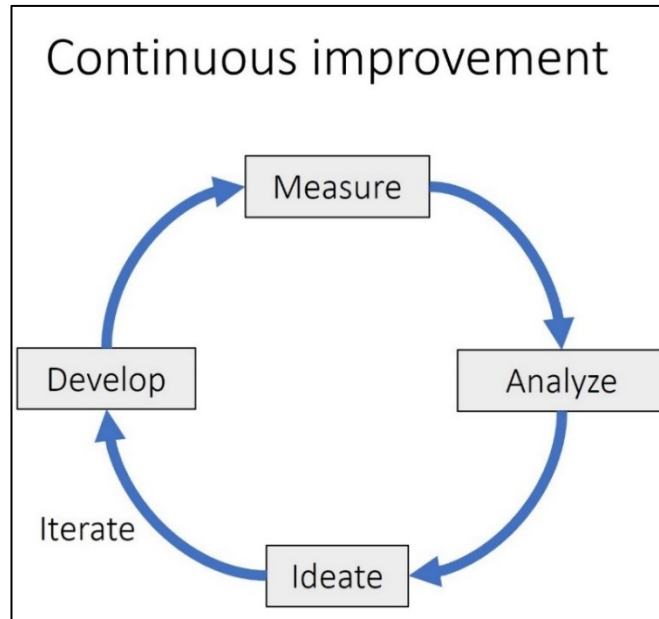


Figure 29. Continuous measuring and improvement.

One improvement idea that could be tested is that includes a short time for impulse purchases to the end of the flower course schedule. The flower course time could be as before, but in the introduction of the flower course, the reserved time for shopping after the course could be advertised. This way the customers know that the entrepreneur has reserved a special time for example 15 minutes for this activity and it may encourage them to make impulse purchases, make flower orderings, or ask questions. During that time the entrepreneur can focus to serve and collect payments from customers better because the flower course works are already completed. Development suggestion which was done during the study is presented in the improved service blueprint with light green and further development suggestions are presented in the improved service blueprint with light purple (Figure 30.).

IMPROVED SERVICE BLUEPRINT																									
PRESERVICE																DURING SERVICE						AFTER SERVICE			
FRONTSTAGE	Visualisation of the service landscape																								
	Physical	Online	Online, personal communication	Online service	Flower wholesale	Flower shop	Flower shop							Flower shop	Online	Online/personal communication									
	Customer / User actions	Search flower course information	Recommendation from previous customer	Book and pay the course			Greet	Listen the Introduction	Collect the material	Ask questions	Bind flowers	Finish and pack the work	Look around the store and look for impulse buys	Thanks and goodbyes	Follow the Instagram, Facebook.	Recommend the service									
Line of Interaction	Service provider's actions / online actions	Update Instagram, Facebook, web-pages and web store		Flower course available in web store		Prepare the flower store for the course	Greet	Give the introduction, show materials and technique	Help and support	Share own expertise	Help and support	Support	Get the payment from impulse buys	Thanks and goodbyes. Clean and organize the flower store premises.											
BACKSTAGE	Service provider's actions	Plan new flower courses and schedule			Purchase materials for the flower course	Prepares materials									Updates social media channels, Instagram, Facebook.	Plans customer relationship management									
	Support	Web store																							
	Network				Flower wholesale																				
	Improvement ideas	Create materials for digital flower course	Provide digital flower course in web store	Course registration and payment handled in web store.								Gather feedback. Start continuous improvement process. It can be short survey and ask about emotions.	Some time reserved for shopping		Improve flower course advertisement and planning customer communication	Customer relationship management.									

Figure 30. Improved service blueprint.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

The study aimed to research how the current flower course service could be developed. The thesis was a case study where qualitative research methods were used. The current state of the flower course service and how that could be developed based on the research result was found with service design tools and methods. The research process followed the double diamond process where service design tools and methods were added. This chapter describes the research process and learnings during the process.

Before the research process was even started literature about design thinking, service design, customer experience, and trends were read. Based on the literature, some points of interest arose for the researcher. Consumer trends and emotions were included in this study. Emotions and how to measure those were brought up in the second research question. It has been studied that even two-thirds of the customer experience is emotional. The problem with measuring emotions is that the measurement should be done immediately after the customer contact point so that the emotion has not disappeared or changed. In this study, emotions were measured with a technic of one word and right after the flower course, when the flower coursework has been finalized. This was chosen because it is a quick way to get emotion and it says more than, for example, choosing a smiley face.

The first phase of the double diamond process was the discover phase. The discover phase defined the current status of the flower course service. The main goal in this stage was to understand the current state of the flower course service. Benchmarking of the flower course service showed that there are online and onsite flower course services. Flower course payment and registration observation showed different flower course registration and payment methods. The observation provided information about the general price level of the flower course. Interview with the entrepreneur provided company strategy, vision, mission, and values. This information needed to be understood because it creates a basis for flower course service development. The development work could not be done against this information. Information was reviewed during the thesis work. Values were examined when the value proposition canvas was filled. The company's mission is to provide flower courses. When revenue streams were filled in the business model canvas they showed that flower course

service is bringing significant revenue in the quiet flower seasons. The emotions of the flower course that the commissioner aims for is success and research results revealed that this emotion is realized by the customers.

The define phase gathered customer insights. Observation and going to the flower course with the users increased the understanding of what happens before, during, and after the course. Observation revealed the relaxing atmosphere of the flower course. The customers silently concentrated to do their work and enjoyed the flowers. Observation showed that the current service is at a good level. This understanding would not have been achieved without experiencing it on the spot in a flower shop. Dialogue interviews were done among the customers participating in the flower course. Based on the dialogue interviews, mental well-being came to prominence, as flower therapy and relaxation were the users' expectations for the course. An empathy map was done based on the insights and it helped to visualize and understand the customer experience.

The ideation and development phase targeted creating ideas on how to improve the current flower course service. Created personas that represented users of the flower course service and helped to express customer needs and desires. Personas, customer journey, value proposition canvas, business model canvas, and service blueprint were done in this phase.

The improved service blueprint was done in the delivery phase of the process. All customer actions before, during, and after the service were defined in that. A customer journey map and commissioner actions were combined with that. Development ideas and pain points of the service were added to the service blueprint. The service blueprint helped to summarize and see the actions and the whole service on one page. The service blueprint summarized the research results and results of the develop phase to one delivery.

The research question of the study was "How the current flower course service can be developed?" The research question was answered using service design methods and tools. The observation made in the discovery phase demonstrated already that the flower course service level is good. However based on benchmarking, observation, and the results of the dialogue interviews, some improvement needs, and further development proposals were raised. One improvement would be flower course advertisements with an email. This would improve and develop customer relationships.



Another improvement worth testing would be to reserve some shopping time at the end of the flower course. During this time customers could do impulse purchasing, flower orderings, or ask questions from the commissioner.

The second research question “How to follow flower course success and customer emotions?” was answered with the survey and data analysis. The current emotion was asked the customer right after the flower course. Results of the survey revealed that customer emotions, overall satisfaction, and NPS rate were in line and a word of emotion describes numeral values of overall satisfaction and NPS. Customers with high emotional connections are more valuable and profitable for the commissioner. Further actions for the commissioner are to decide what and how to measure, do continuous measuring, analyzing, and development. Gathering continuous feedback from the customers and allocating time to analyze would help to react to the changing environment in the future. With the help of design thinking and knowing the needs and pain points of customer, it is possible to act as a pioneer of change. Acting as a role of pioneer helps proactive adaptation to the change. Even the short survey for the customers gives an insight into the current state.

On top of this further development proposal for a digital flower course was identified. Developing and creating a digital flower course take some time but when ready can be offered at any time in a web store. When the digital flower course is available in the web store marketing could be done through social media. Based on the orders and pre-payments a suitable material package can be created for the participants to pick up from the flower store.

An interesting observation the results showed was the relevance of mental well-being. Mental well-being came up in dialogue interviews, it was the motivation to register for the flower course. The survey also revealed that the emotion experienced by the customers immediately after the flower course were related to mental well-being. One of the customer trends of the future is a “temple of body and soul” trend which highlights the importance of this kind of service in the future as well.

The reliability and validity of this study have some limitations. This study was a case study of flower courses organized by one entrepreneur with a limited number of participants. The study started in the springtime of 2021 and finished in the autumn of 2022. The study period was long, but one of the reasons it took so long was the

Covid19 restrictions. During the heaviest restrictions, the flower courses were not organized and research could not be done.

The research topic and process were interesting and chosen outside of the researcher's work. It was refreshing to enter the world of flowers, creating with hands and entrepreneurship. Although the topic was outside of my work, I have used the knowledge gained from the research process, methods, and tools of service design in my current work. I consider this one of the most valuable things I got from this study.

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First interview with an entrepreneur, interview questions

- What is your company's mission?
- What is your company's vision?
- What is your company's strategy?
- What is your company's values?
- What kind of emotions you want to arise with your service and products in customer?
- What is the current state of the flower course service?

## Palautekysely kukkakurssista

Kyselyn vastauksia käytetään kehittämään Elovainion kukan kurssitoimintaa.

1. Mistä sait tiedon kukkakurssista?

*Merkitse vain yksi soikio.*

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Elovainion kukasta
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Kuvaile yhdellä sanalla tunnettasi kukkakurssin jälkeen?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Kuinka tyytyväinen olit järjestettyyn kukkakurssiin?

*Merkitse vain yksi soikio.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Erittäin tyytymätön	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Erittäin tyytyväinen

4. Kuinka monelle Elovainion kukan järjestämälle kurssille olet osallistunut tähän mennessä?

*Merkitse vain yksi soikio.*

- 1 - 5 kurssille
- 5 -10 kurssille
- yli 10 kurssille

5. Millaiselle kukkakurssille haluaisit tulevaisuudessa osallistua?

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6. Kuinka todennäköisesti suosittelisit tätä kurssia ystävällesi?

*Merkitse vain yksi soikio.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Kuinka usein asioit Elovainion kukassa?

*Merkitse vain yksi soikio.*

- noin kerran kuukaudessa
- useamman kerran kuukaudessa
- harvemmin